

# Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1888.

NO. 1.

## POETRY.

### BE STILL, AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.

PAIN'S furnace heat within me quivers,  
God's breath upon the flame doth blow,  
And all my heart in anguish shivers  
And trembles at the fiery glow;  
And yet I whisper—"As God will,"  
And in his hottest fire hold still.

He comes and lays my heart all heated  
On the hard anvil, minded so  
Into his own fair shape to beat it  
With his hammer, blow on blow;  
And yet I whisper—"As God will,"  
And at his heaviest blow hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it,  
The sparks fly off at every blow;  
He turns it o'er and o'er and heats it,  
And lets it cool and makes it glow;  
And yet I whisper—"As God will,"  
And in his mighty hand hold still.

Why should I murmur for the sorrow  
Thus only longer lived would be;  
Its end may come, and will to-morrow,  
When God has done his work in me.  
So I say trusting—"As God will,"  
And trusting to the end, hold still.

He kindles for my profit purely,  
Affliction's glowing fiery brand;  
And all his heaviest blows are surely  
Inflicted by a master hand;  
So I say praying—"As God will,"  
And hope in him and suffer still.  
—From the German.

### CAST THY BURDEN ON THE LORD.

PSALM LV. 22.

WEARY, heavy laden soul,  
O'er whom waves of sorrow roll,  
Who art brought by grief and fear  
To the borders of despair:  
Unto thee from heaven above  
Speaks a voice of power and love;  
Hearken to the gracious word,  
"Cast thy burden on the Lord."

Heavy troubles on thee press,  
Sore afflictions, deep distress,  
Worldly crosses, harrowing pain,  
Foes without and fears within.  
From the weary weight of grief  
Thou in vain hast sought relief;  
Earth can thee no help afford:  
"Cast thy burden on the Lord."

Is it sin afflicts thee so?  
Does thy vileness cause thy woe?  
Hast thou sought for good within  
Thy poor heart, and sought in vain?  
Therefore dost thou weep and cry,  
And in dust and ashes lie?  
Vile, polluted, self-abhorred,  
"Cast thy burden on the Lord."

It is Jesus speaks to thee,  
And his power thou soon shalt see,  
Working in thee his sweet will,  
His salvation to reveal.  
Once all this that burdens thee  
Lay upon his soul, and he  
Thy salvation then secured:  
"Cast thy burden on the Lord."

In the city hast thou seen  
Violence and strife between  
Those who have been wont to move  
In the holy bonds of love?  
And hast thou desired in vain  
To bring Zion peace again?  
Not by men is peace restored:  
"Cast thy burden on the Lord."

Losses, crosses, grief or fear,  
Pain, or sin, or anxious care,  
Whatso'er thy burden be,  
Jesus will deliver thee.  
Thou his faithfulness hast proved,  
And thou never shalt be moved;  
Be his blessed name adored:  
"Cast thy burden on the Lord."

SILAS H. DURAND.

OUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa., Nov., 1887.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### JOHN XIV. 1-3.

"LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

This is the language of that King of whom the wise man spoke when he said, "Where the word of a king is there is power;" and like every saying of Jesus, whether promise, teaching or command, it is with all the power of him "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," and as surely accomplishes all his will in the poor, distressed soul to whom it is spoken, as did the command, "Let there be light," upon the darkness that covered the face of the deep, when the earth was without form and void.

Peter represents the condition of those to whom this sweet command and precious promise applies. Not Peter as he stood at the time these words were spoken, full of self-confidence, boasting that he would never forsake the Savior, even though all men should; but Peter as he stood a little while after, ashamed, abased, astonished at the revelation that he has seen of his own wickedness, terrified at the sight of his awful depravity, having done what the Savior has just now declared he should do, but which he could not believe himself capable of doing, and standing alone without, weeping bitterly. All the Lord's people must know something of this bitterness on account of their deeply felt depravity before they can be said to believe in God, or can need the command, "Let not your heart be troubled." "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Then if any one knows and believes in God, he has not attained unto that knowledge by study or searching, but has received a revelation of him; and that view of God in his exaltation and holiness always has the effect it did upon Job and Isaiah and Daniel—causes one to abhor himself because he is vile, to see himself a man of unclean lips, and to find all his comeliness turned in him into corruption. The glory of God is only seen as in a glass; that is, we see it in our own experience. We see that there is a glory in the ministration of condemnation and death to the sinner. We believe in God when we feel ourselves justly condemned by his righteous law.

When Peter stood alone weeping bitterly he could not see anything in himself but what he must regard as abhorrent in the sight of a holy God; and just when this one whom he so loved, and by whom he had been comforted, had told them he was going away, he falls into this awful depth. Surely he cannot help being troubled; and how timely to him, as to all of them, comes this command, "Let not your heart be troubled." This following immediately the declaration that Peter should deny him thrice that night, must have some reference to the trouble that would follow that awful evidence of his utter depravity. We must remember that while Peter and the other disciples had been called to be followers of Jesus, and while it had been revealed to them by the Father that he was the Son of the living God, they did not yet know the way of salvation. They did not know that Jesus must die to deliver them from death; and although he told them he must be crucified and rise again, they did not understand what he meant, but it was hid from them that they should not know it. There was but one way for them to learn this, and that was by experiencing the fellowship of his sufferings. They must follow him not merely along the roads, through the fields, and in the cities of Judea, but in the dark roads of sorrow, suffering and death on account of sin. Peter was following him when he went out and wept bitterly on account of his awful sin, and the depravity it revealed; for that very sin, and all that wickedness, was what caused the dear Savior to be "a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief," made him "offer up prayers with strong crying and tears," and finally pressed him down to death. The majesty of the holy law of God was thus manifested.

When one feels the weight of his sins he truly believes in God; and without this no one can truly believe in him. It is by the Son that the revelation of the Father is given; and at his command the living soul who believes in God, seeing his awful justice and holiness in the ministration of the law, believes also in him, the Son of God, who was delivered to suffer the accursed death of the cross for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. "Believe also in me." "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

All knowledge is in love; for "he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." And "this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Therefore eternal life, and all knowledge, and all the righteousness of the law, are embraced in that ineffable love which shines in the face of Jesus Christ as he turns it upon the poor sinner, filling his heart with joy and gladness and peace. There is where we see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and nowhere else. It is hid from the wisdom of the world, but is thus revealed to the poor sinner, who is as weak and ignorant as a babe. If we have ever had a view of Jesus as the Savior of his people, have seen how he could save them, and have been drawn toward him in holy desires and heavenly longings and prayers, it is because God has shined in our hearts, and Jesus has said within our hearts, "Believe also in me." It was just when we could be sure there was a God of justice, and we felt his power and right to condemn, but could not see how he could be just and save such a sinner as we, that this word of power was felt within us. How timely it was; and what a wonder to us that we should find ourselves believing in Jesus as our own dear Savior, as having laid down his own precious and holy life to put away our sins. We cannot understand how and why we should thus have come to believe on him, such sinners as we still are, and having done nothing to warrant us in having such a hope; and we cannot but wonder that we should have such "peace from trouble," for we cannot understand any reason for it. But he gives us his word to tell us. It is because he who has power to still the raging winds and waters has said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Thus we have the "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

"In my Father's house are many mansions." How suitable is this declaration to one in the condition of Peter after having done what the Savior had just now foretold he should do. He had thrice denied any knowledge of Jesus, and now he was being sifted by Satan as wheat. In that sifting experience in his soul all the chaff of sin and wretchedness was tossed to the surface, hiding completely from his view the little grains of precious faith. Now if admission to the house of God, to dwell with all his holy family in the sweet shelter

and enjoyment of his favor and love forever, depend upon any worthiness of ours, Peter can see no hope for himself, and he knows of no other way. Only the righteous and obedient have any right there. Peter had not yet understood what Jesus meant when he said, "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." That righteousness which is by faith of Jesus Christ was not yet revealed and opened to his understanding; yet that faith was in him as grains of wheat buried up in the chaff of his own sinfulness, and of that vanity which a little before he had mistaken for true righteousness. That faith could not fail; but Peter must learn about this chaff of sin and vanity before he can understand about the wheat of faith. The negative comes first. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done." "Not according to our works." It is a hard and bitter lesson, this negative; and its effect is to cause one who receives the precious knowledge of how the salvation is wrought, and learns that the Lord was ready to save him, to "walk softly before the Lord all his days in the bitterness of his soul."

Although Peter had done so badly, are we to suppose that any one of the disciples could feel that he was any better than he, so as to look down upon him? His condition, as we see it so plainly, only represents the condition in which each one is taught to see himself, a poor, depraved sinner. All are taught to know the depravity of their hearts, and that because of this they can have no hope of ever entering the house of God to dwell with his holy family in glory. Now appears the peculiar power and significance of this word, "many." In the legal house, over which Moses as a servant was faithful, there was no dwelling place or mansion for any but the children of Israel after the flesh; and only the righteous among them could remain or have a place to stay in those mansions. All others were excluded. All transgressors were cut off, unless the transgression was provided for in the atoning ceremonies by which such were made ceremonially righteous. Now Peter, as well as all who see their hearts in the light of eternal truth, see that no dwelling place remains for them in the favor of God. Just at this time, in the experience of all who see this, another way of salvation appears, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to the mercy and eternal purpose of God, and by grace which was given us in Christ before the world began; and this is for a company that no man can number, known only to God, who has chosen them in Christ before the world began, and has redeemed them by the precious blood of Christ out of every kindred and tribe and tongue under the whole heavens. These are all so poor in spirit that they could not pay for one crumb of the bread of righteousness; and they are so vile in their own eyes that they come

with weeping, and are led with supplication. To each one of them it appears certain that there can be no place for him, and he stands without, weeping. Just at this time the Savior's gracious words apply, "In my Father's house are many mansions." That word expands, and reaches out in every direction, including and gathering in to the embrace and shelter of this everlasting love every one who looks longingly toward that heavenly house, but says within himself, "There is no place for me." The poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, in a spiritual sense, who have been cast out of the legal house, and are "in the lanes and streets of the city," are brought in by the everlasting love and infinite grace expressed in this word "many." "If it were not so, I would have told you." As though he had said, "I would not have talked to you of these heavenly things, and showed you the riches of my Father's house, and caused you to love those things, and to desire to dwell in that house, if it had not contained many mansions, enough for every soul who ever has desired or ever shall desire a place there." Many! It covers the ground of all possible need. It reaches to and will satisfy every heavenward desire. If it could ever be that one poor soul could ever wish to be in that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and should be turned away with the words, "There is no mansion here for you," then the word "many" would not have its meaning fulfilled. Those who are spoken of as knocking and saying, "Open unto us," who are turned away by the words, "Depart from me; I never knew you," are not desiring to dwell in the house not made with hands, but are seeking recognition on account of their own works, by which they vainly imagine they have provided for themselves a dwelling place in the presence of God. None who desire admission into this house have any works of their own to admire or depend upon; and to each of them will be given a precious experience that there are many mansions when he can say with joyful surprise, "There is a mansion for me, even me, who was further off than any one else." There is a mansion in our Father's house for each one of all the elect of God.

The word "house," in reference to the Lord's people, is used in various ways as a figure to set forth some point of truth. They are sometimes spoken of as the house of God in the sense of a family, as in Hebrews iii. 6: "Whose house are we." The figure is somewhat different in First Timothy iii. 15, where the house of God is declared to be the church of God. In First Peter ii. 5 the Lord's people are referred to as the material that are built up into a house. In the Scripture we are considering the word "house" evidently is used as a figure in its ordinary meaning, as a large house in which a great family dwell. The dimensions of our Father's

house are not prescribed by the law, nor limited to the number of the children of Israel after the flesh; nor is it made uncertain in its capacity, to be enlarged or diminished, according to what may be required by those who may prove obedient in the end. But this house is according to the eternal purpose of God, for just the number of the elect, who are "more than the stars in the heavens for multitude, and as the sand upon the seashore innumerable."

"I go to prepare a place for you." Sorrow had filled their hearts because he had told them he was going away from them; yet his going away was necessary in order that they might have a place in the house, and be able to occupy the mansion which each was entitled to according to the eternal purpose of God. Because of their sin the law barred the entrance of every soul. Jesus went away into death in order to remove that barrier. He put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, and thus fulfilled the righteousness of the law, and slew its enmity, and prepared the heavenly places where he receives his people unto himself, to sit down together in the sweet rest of the gospel, each by faith occupying a mansion in the house of God, as becomes one that is rich, the mansion of eternal love and grace and blessedness.

It seems but a little portion of our time that we experience the full comfort and safety and joy of those mansions; and we seem to get so used to coldness, and to dwelling in the letter, to studying about Jesus instead of feeling his presence, that when one is brought to feel the fullness of his soul-reviving presence, so that his heart glows with the fire of love, and his face shines with the light of heavenly graces, and his tongue breaks forth with "Hosannas in the highest," we are startled, and would sometimes even be ready to check and reprove such an one for undue enthusiasm. But it will ever be that when the dear Savior does come in the power of his resurrection, and receive a poor soul unto himself, to sit down with him in the unspeakable blessedness of gospel rest, that one will greatly rejoice in the Lord; for it is said, "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." If these should hold their peace when they behold the mighty works of Jesus, and feel him coming unto them in the power and love and glory of the gospel, "the stones would immediately cry out."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 25, 1887.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Dec. 7, 1883.

TO MR. F. W. KEENE—MY DEAR BROTHER:—If one so unworthy may address you thus. I received your very kind letter in due time, and am sorry to have kept you so long for an answer. I have often thought of writing, but felt that I could not. I assure you it gave both my dear mother and myself much pleasure to

find that we were not forgotten by you, but that we were remembered in love by one of the Lord's own chosen people. But I wonder, if you knew me as I know myself, whether you would have written to me as you did. I am so vile and worthless, I feel that in me there is no good thing. I am prone to evil, and that continually. You ask me, dear brother, to tell you of what I sometimes hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me. Well, I will try; but I fear I have nothing to tell. This is often my trouble. While others can tell the very time and place where they were called by his grace, I cannot. While they tell of days and nights of anguish on account of sin, and of the heavenly joy that followed when the assurance was given them that their sins were forgiven, that they were forever put away by the spotless Lamb of God, I fear that I have never felt this. O what a blessed feeling that must be! What more could mortal man wish for? To know that it was for me that the blessed Savior, the Lord of life and glory, shed his precious blood; to know that for me he prepared a mansion above; O blessed thought! But, ah, is it for me? Surely, if it was, I should not be so cold and lifeless.

"If I love, why am I thus?  
Why this dull and lifeless frame?  
Hardly, sure, could they be worse  
Who have never heard his name."

I can hardly remember the time when I was not somewhat anxious about my soul. When I was very young I went to the "Church of England" with my brothers and sisters, and of course I used to think that all that were good would go to heaven, and the bad to hell. But we were first sent to the Baptist Chapel (Strict Baptist of England), when I was about seven or eight years old, and I think from that time I always looked upon that people as God's people. I loved them from the first, and was never so happy as when there with them. I do not know when I first felt that I was a sinner; I think it gradually dawned upon me. I saw two of my sisters, one a short time after the other, brought to know the Lord, and baptized in the chapel. One of them I especially noticed. She used to tremble when holding the hymn book, when in trouble on account of sin, and O how I wished I were like her; but I felt that I could not be. We had a very unhappy home, but I used to be very happy all day Sunday, for there were services three times a day, so that we felt sad when the day was ended. We lived very near the chapel, while most of the people lived at a distance, and we used often to walk part of the way home with one or another of them, often the minister, in the hope of hearing a few more precious words fall from their lips before leaving them. But I do not think they ever guessed that I wanted to hear anything, but that I merely went as company for my sister. They often

spoke words of encouragement to her, and O how I used to listen for one that would suit me. Yes, and surely sometimes there were some. But when they talked of how they now hated the things they once loved, and loved the things they once hated, and whereas they were once blind now they could see, I was discouraged, for I could not say this. Still O how I longed to be like them. Surely I did, and do, hunger and thirst after righteousness. Why these longings? why these sighings for something the world can never give? When I was about eleven years old we had a new teacher in the Sunday School. He had lately been brought into the church, and he seemed to be so full of love to Jesus that I loved him right away. One Sunday he explained to us the meaning of the word grace. He said it meant love, favor, affections, and I think this led me to think more earnestly than before about my condition. I could see clearly that unless I was born again, and unless I was one of those favored ones, there was no hope for me. I used to wish that I had been a great sinner, and had been stopped in my wild career by the Holy Spirit, through some portion of Scripture applied to my soul. At the same time I felt I was wicked to wish it. Not very long after this I had to leave Sunday School and go away from home. I used often to think of what my dear teacher had said, and the minister too, and O how I wished and longed and prayed that I might feel that I was one of these favored, chosen ones. About this time I dreamed the dream that I spoke to you of when in London. I thought I saw the end of the world. I was sitting in a pathway that crossed a field, and all on one side of the world became dark, and it rained fire and brimstone; and the other side was as bright as the sun. On the one side all was despair, wringing their hands, and running every way to escape, but could not. On the other side all was peace and happiness, people walking about, dressed in white, and looking so happy; and out of the midst of them came my teacher (Mr. Foreman), and with him the blessed Savior, shining as the sun. They came right up to me, and Mr. Foreman said, "This is one of my scholars;" and Jesus smiled upon me. O such a heavenly smile! He laid his hand upon my head, but before he spoke to me I awoke. I felt very happy for awhile, and thought, Surely this means something. But then the thought came, It was only a dream after all. But it has often encouraged me when I was almost ready to give up in despair. I never mentioned to any one what I felt. So time passed on until I was seventeen years of age; then we came to Canada. Little did we think when we left England that we had heard the gospel preached for the last time for many years; but we soon found, when we arrived here, that there

was nothing we could hear for hungry souls; and as year after year glided by I began to question whether there was any reality in religion at all. It seemed so strange that we could hear nothing of any one who believed in the only doctrine that I felt could be of any use to the poor sinner, salvation by grace alone. I grew very cold and careless, and the thought would often come to me that no child of God could be like this; for God was able to make his presence felt, and to draw out the heart with love to himself, even though his child be quite alone. I would try to pray, but could not utter a word, and at times it would appear a perfect mockery for me to try to pray. I would think sometimes that I would give it all up and go into company and enjoy myself as others did; for, after all, what difference was there between them and me? I tried to do so, but had to give it up, for it disgusted me, and at night I would think, What is to become of me? So the time went on until about a year ago, when my brother met Mr. John Leitch, and he sent my mother the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Ah, surely, God's hand was in it. We then found that there were such people in America, and then O how we longed to meet with them, which we did, and found they were the same dear people as we had left in England. Once more we were among those who worship God in spirit and truth. O that I were one of them. But after conversing with them and you, I felt more unworthy than ever. I came home and felt I could never be one of them, for I could not tell them anything satisfactory; and yet why do I love them, and how is it that I could have sat forever and have listened to them expound the Scriptures? What you said, though, gave me some encouragement, and when I got home I cried to the Lord to give me some token for good; and, strange to say, before I opened my eyes in the morning these words came to me, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye believe in God, believe also in me." I was amazed. I thought, Can those words be for me? I had often thought of those beautiful words, which our precious Savior spake to his disciples before leaving them, and thought how it must have cheered them to think of them after he was gone; but I never thought of claiming them for myself. But then I thought, Surely I must have some lot and part in this matter; but O! I am so sinful day by day, I go on continually falling into sin, my nature is so vile; yet I desire to do right. But when I would do good, evil is present with me, so that I cannot do the things I would.

Dear Mr. Keene, I am afraid I have tired your patience. When I commenced I did not think of writing so much; but I will now close, with christian love from my dear mother. Your beautiful letter was a blessing to her and to me. Pray for me, dear

brother. I feel that what I have written is very unprofitable; but if you do not consider me altogether unworthy, please write me a few lines at your leisure, and tell me where I am wrong. My dear mother will be very happy to hear from you at any time. Her christian love to Mrs. Keene and all your friends, especially your grandmother.

Your unworthy sister, if one at all,  
BERTHA WELLS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, March 1, 1884.

TO MR. KEENE—MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—I feel I would like to try and pen a few lines to you this morning. It is Sunday morning, and people are wending their way to the different churches; and I thought as I was watching them, O that there was one where the true gospel of Jesus was preached, where I could go in the hope of getting a crumb! But O! I feel so dissatisfied with it all, that sometimes I feel that I will never go again to the so-called places of worship. Still, when I have been there, I have often felt encouragement from the fact that my soul desires something that is not to be found there. It does seem wonderful, as you say, when we look at the thousands around us who care for none of these things, to whom the precious Savior is a root out of dry ground, with no form nor comeliness. But I can say, He is not so to me. To me he is altogether lovely. Yet O how forgetful I am of him, and how my wicked heart goes seeking for satisfaction in the things of the world, so that after all I often feel there is no difference between myself and those whose sole happiness is in worldly things.

"Hardly, sure, can they be worse  
Who have never heard his name."

I cannot tell of my feelings as I read your letter. I thought, Who am I, that I should receive such an epistle of love from one of God's dear people? Often have I thought I would give the world to be able to speak to a minister of the gospel; and now my hopes are realized, and I have read your letters over and over, and my heart has been made glad, though I have been afraid that you, too, are deceived in me; that there can be no good in poor, sinful me; and often I cry,

"Lord, decide my doubtful case,  
Thou who art thy people's Sun;  
Shine upon thy work of grace,  
If it be indeed begun."

Yes, it is the Lord alone that must give us the sweet assurance; nothing else will suffice. My dear mother was very glad to hear from you.

BERTHA WELLS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, July 12.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I am very sorry that I have neglected writing you so long. I did not write, before going to Ekfrid, to thank you for the papers containing your experience, and then when I saw you there I said scarcely anything to you; but I hope it did not offend you, for I assure you it was not because I did

not appreciate your kindness in writing to me such precious letters as you have; for my heart has been filled to overflowing with gratitude and with astonishment that you, whom I esteemed so highly, should address poor, unworthy me as you did. When I received one of your letters I was feeling lifeless and cold and sinful, and as I read it I felt my heart melt (as wax before the fire) into love and strong desire, and O how I did enjoy reading your experience. Ah, methinks that you should have no need to doubt, seeing you can look back on such a calling. You can indeed make your calling and election sure. But I know, dear brother, you cannot always feel so. It would not do; for then you could not sympathize with the weaklings of the flock, such as I hope I am; for if I am one at all, I feel I am the smallest, weakest and most worthless of all. But the poet says,

"Those feeble desires, those wishes so  
weak,  
'Tis Jesus inspires, and bids you still seek;  
The Lord, whom thou seekest, will not  
tarry long;  
And to him the weakest is dear as the  
strong."

And I know I do desire to know him, to love him, and to be more like him; and I did feel, as that dear man of God, Elder P. G. Lester, opened up the Scriptures, my heart to burn within me. I thought, Surely I have some interest in this matter; and how I did wish to speak to that dear people, but felt that I could not. I thought I should not be able to utter a word. And I hope that after all I am not deceiving them. I know I told them the truth, what I did tell, in my poor way; but I have thought many times since that after all if they knew me would they decided as they did? But I felt after leaving the meeting-house such a quiet, peaceful feeling steal over me; and I felt, although doubts (little ones) would keep showing themselves, that all was right. The next morning before rising these words came so sweetly to my soul, "I the Lord am he that brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage." I am willing to be judged by God's people, and my prayer to God is, "Search me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

Your sister in hope of eternal life,  
BERTHA WELLS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Nov. 29.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE:—As I have a little time at my disposal, I will try to pen you a few lines, though I am afraid it will be a poor scribble at best. As I read the beautiful letters you have sent me, and others, I feel ashamed to attempt to write to you; yet I feel bound to do my best, in hope that you will again favor me, though feeling still unworthy, and, in fact, more unworthy than ever. As I look back to the time when first you wrote to me, I find I have made poor progress. O what a poor, stumbling creature I am! If it were

not that I hear of others complaining of the same thing, I sometimes think I should sink in despair. How it does seem to cheer me on at times to feel that those whom we feel are without doubt the Lord's dear people have been in just the same places that we have been in. But O, dear brother, I often fear that after all I am not one of those; yet

"His love in times past forbids me to think He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink." For surely in this I am not deceived. It could be none other than his mighty love that has seemed to lift me, to raise my poor soul above the earth and earthly things. O what a blessed, heavenly time I experienced in Ekfrid a year ago last June. I seemed to be carried out of myself, to feast on the precious things of the gospel, so that I was constrained to tell to the church my little story. But O how different were my feelings at the next meeting, at the time of my baptism. Never had I felt the weight of my sins as I did at that time—the time that I had looked forward to with joy. O! it was dreadful, and I felt I was adding to my sin a thousand fold in daring to make a public profession before men. I felt like one walking in the dark. I cannot describe how I felt. And I think that at the communion table I felt even worse. I really thought my heart would break. What a strange thing is this; was it not, dear brother? Was ever any one of the Lord's people baptized while in such a condition? But I hope the Lord led dear Elder Biggs to speak a word of comfort to my poor soul, so that the cloud seemed to gradually lift and pass away.

Dear brother, I have nearly filled this sheet of paper, and am afraid I shall tire you. You will be grieved to hear that my poor sister, Mrs. Smith, has been in sore trouble. She has lost her youngest child, the dear little girl who was sick at the time you were here. It is true that many are the afflictions of the righteous. O may the Lord deliver us out of them all. Hoping yourself and family are well, I will close, with love from your unworthy sister,

BERTHA WELLS.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Nov. 23, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Although I have at different times had portions of my christian experience and trials published in different periodicals, I have felt a desire for some time to give to the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a detailed account of the Lord's dealings with me, as I trust; first, in delivering me from the "power of darkness," and translating me into the "kingdom of his dear Son," together with my call to the "work of the ministry" (if I have any), and also some of my trials and troubles, sorrows and joys, &c. Also, if the Lord will, I wish before I close to add my testimony to some of the things "which are most surely believed among us."

I was born November 17, 1848, in

Tuscaloosa County, Alabama, where I now live, which makes me just a little past thirty-nine years of age at this writing; and I have never lived out of this county. The year of my birth was an eventful one, in some respects, as it was the year that there was so much excitement about gold in California; also the year that Brigham Young led the Mormons and settled them in the territory of Utah; and also about the time of the division between the Missionary and Primitive Baptists in this part of the country. My father's name is Josiah Jackson Redd, and he is still living near where I was born. My mother died in 1865. Her maiden name was McElroy. My parents were very poor people, and neither of them ever identified themselves with any religious denomination. My grandparents on my father's side were Missionary Baptists, and on my mother's side they were Old School Baptists. Although my mother never made any public profession of religion, she was a devoted and pious woman, and seldom ever let a day pass without spending a portion of the time in reading her Bible. Indeed she was so much devoted to the Bible that my father (who seemed not to have much concern about such things) often scolded her for reading so much. But read she would; and she spent many hours in calling her children around her and instructing them how to live and conduct themselves, always directing their minds to the great "I Am," who rules over the destinies of nations, and who takes cognizance of all the words and actions of fallen man, and who knows the thoughts of all hearts. She gave evident marks, before and at the time of her death, that she was a humble and sorrowing child of God; and so far as her eternal rest is concerned, I have not the shadow of a doubt. Her excuse for not following her Savior in baptism always was her felt sense of unworthiness, which is an indelible mark that always characterizes the true child of God. Although my father has never made a public profession of faith, I have reason to believe that he, too, has "tasted that the Lord is gracious." I have three brothers, all my juniors in age. All of them have been identified with the Primitive Baptist church. At present one of them stands disconnected with the church, on account of the illegality of his baptism. Another stands excluded; and the youngest, whom I baptized in Mississippi, seems to have strayed off, and has been holding his church letter for three or four years. I have one own sister. She resides in Choctaw County, Mississippi, and belongs to the Methodists.

I cannot tell when I first had serious impressions in regard to death and eternity, but as long ago almost as I can remember, I know I could not have been more than six or eight years of age. The underlying cause of these impressions, I am not able

to say what it was. I only know that I frequently found myself in deep and solemn meditations upon these things; and having been taught that there was to be a great and dreadful day of judgment some time in the future, and that at that time the rocks would be falling, the moon bleeding, the sun darkened, the stars falling, and the whole earth would be in one solid flame of fire, I greatly dreaded that day above all others; for I had no idea but what I should live to see that dreadful day. But as much as I thought upon these things, I was a very bad boy. I was in love with sin and was very disobedient to my parents. There were two Missionary Baptist churches within three or four miles of where my father lived, and no other kind anywhere near us. But we were so extremely poor and destitute of clothing, that I seldom had the opportunity of circulating among religious people. I cannot now remember to have ever went to peaching but three times till I was fifteen years old. Those three instances are vivid in my mind, from the fact that at the first place I saw a black woman give a child a piece of cake, and I cried for some of the same, and my mother was about to whip me for it. The next time I went I remember that a black woman jumped up right in the time of preaching and began to hollow and spin around on the floor like a top, which so scared me that I was very anxious to get away from there. The recollection I have about going to meeting the third time is that there was a big young man present who was barefooted, and who held to the back end of our wagon as we came from the church. We took dinner at Mr. Thompson's, and they had beets for dinner, the first I ever saw. They were so red and pretty, I thought surely they must be very good; but when I tried them I could not bare the taste of them. I merely mention these incidents to show how ignorant I was, and what my opportunities were; and when I tell the reader that in my boyhood days I seldom ever got a pair of shoes before Christmas, and that I never had a respectable coat to wear till I was about sixteen years' old (and that was a home-made coat ornamented with brass buttons), and that during the war I have on many occasions sat down to dry corn bread and bran coffee, and that we had to dig up the dirt in the smoke-house and boil it to get salt to salt our victuals, you will see that my poverty was great. My father, though so poor, managed to send his children to school at odd times, and in this way I acquired what little education I have. My father has no education at all—cannot even spell his own name. When I was about thirteen years old my father volunteered in the Confederate army, and was in that horrible war for three years. In the battle of Chickamauga, Tennessee, he was

entirely recovered from it, nor ever will. My father was in Company A, 41st Regiment. When my father went to the war my mother was left with five children, I the eldest. We had a hard time in those days, and my associates were those of a very wild and immoral type, and I became what I call a real bad boy. When I was about fifteen years old the Missionary Baptists held a protracted meeting at Bethany, four miles from us. At this time my father was at home, and I was plowing in wheat; but my father allowed me to attend this meeting at night. At this meeting I became greatly concerned about my condition as a sinner. Montgomery Bell was the principal speaker and the leader of the meeting; and while I do not remember a single word that was uttered in the way of preaching, I still have a vivid recollection as to the forms, features and gestures of the man. At the close of each sermon he came down on the floor, and while the members and others sung a suitable song for the occasion he extended the opportunity to all those who desired an interest in the prayers of the church to come forward and bow at the altar. It would be impossible for me to describe my feelings at this juncture of the services. I only know that I shook as though I had a hard ague, and there was an irresistible impression to go to the "mourners' bench," and I could not keep my seat. I felt that I was a sinner, that I needed salvation, and that none but God could save me, and that must be for the sake of Jesus Christ. When at the "mourners' bench" I did not feel that I could do anything to save myself, but that my salvation depended alone upon the mercy and grace of God. When plowing during the day I would get down upon my knees in the fence corner and try to pray to the God of heaven to relieve me of my burden of sin and guilt, and make me to rejoice in "hope of the glory of God." At last, one night while bowed at the altar I actually prostrated myself upon the floor; for I was in great agony of mind, and desired above all things to have an evidence that Jesus Christ was my Savior. I remember distinctly to have said,

"Here, Lord, I give myself away,  
'Tis all that I can do."

And here then was a little space that is almost lost to memory; for the next thing I remember I was on my feet on the floor, my burden was all gone, a stream of love to God and man seemed to have taken possession of me and pervaded my whole being, and I was praising God at the top of my voice, and embracing every one that came in my reach. At this time the language of the angels that announced the birth of the Savior seemed to suit my feelings, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." For several days after this a perfect peace and quietude reigned within my heart, and I then felt that I

should never see any more trouble. Not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast. And now while I have been narrating these glorious events, my eyes have been filled with tears of joy, and I can but believe that this was the work of God delivering me from the power of darkness, and translating me into the kingdom of his dear Son. A few days after this manifestation of God's mercy to me I united with those people, and was immersed in Hughe's Mill Creek, by Montgomery Bell. My mother tried to dissuade me from joining, because she said I was too young. She believed strongly that baptism is by immersion, and so did I. I suppose it was more from parental teaching than anything else, as I had but a very limited knowledge of the teaching of the Scriptures on that or any other subject.

I will now close this chapter, hoping to resume the subject and to continue if this is published.

Yours in tribulation,

H. J. REDD.

(To be continued.)

PERMISSIVE DECREES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I wish to preface this article with a brief reference to my early trials of faith. I remember well the terrible accusation of conscience at the mere question (only thought), "Do you believe there is a God?" I stopped in the road; for I was on my way to church meeting, perhaps a year or so after I had joined the church; and so deep were the billows of terror that then overwhelmed me, I dared not proceed further until the assurance of faith should be given. I did not cry aloud; I spoke no word that I can remember; but deeper groanings than words can utter, deeper sighs than breath can heave, deeper prayer than tongue can speak, were best expressed within me, like the utterance of "the father of the child," recorded in Mark ix. 24, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." I cannot tell how, nor why, nor just how long, I stood; but a calm and peaceful power seemed to lead me on, even before the tremulous effects of this deep trial had fully passed away; and I enjoyed that meeting full better than many that had preceded, or that have since followed it. I cannot remember when I did not believe that God, even the God of my faith, was infinite, in all that can pertain to the Deity.

I fear I would too much enlarge upon the space in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES should I repeat what has so well been expressed by precious brethren therein, on the subject of God's purposes. I only wish to say a few things that have not been said, and then there will be enough left for all the brotherhood to dwell upon, without repetition. I am fully and (if possible) more fully established in the absolute decrees of God than ever, since all the modern infidelity has only repeated the questions long since put to and silenced in my own infidel nature; and I do not wonder

when I hear the feeble saints express humble and loving questions concerning the greatness of the Lord and the grandeur of his purposes. This does not disturb me. May I feel to enter into sympathy with them, and to speak in tender regard of their solicitude. It seems too great to them for God to stoop to things of small account. One sister said to me, "Do you think that God predestinated all these little things that come to pass?" enumerating trifling matters. "Sister," said I, "a shadow is a small thing, and seems of little account: but did not God set the sun in the heavens to rule the day, and make the law by which its light is given? And has he not also determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation? Well, then, the sun must be up yonder just now, and we here just now; and God's predestined law directs the sun's rays just where we see them now, and leaves our shadow, all in perfect harmony with his own eternal will or purpose, just as we see it now." Darkness and light are alike unto him.

One writer has asked for brother Purington's views on the subject of "Permissive Decrees;" and although I do not wish to enter into any discussion of the subject with the great opposers, nor anticipate brother Purington's reply, I do wish to write a little as to how it looks to me. I cannot perceive any difference in the effect, whether it be *permissive* or *absolute* decrees. I think I can see a great desire on the part of man to apologize for his God. But the God that I worship, I humbly hope, has never asked of me, nor of any of his creatures, to apologize for him. He has, it is true, stooped to frame some of his thoughts into words, to suit the capacity of men; and others he has hid from the "wise and prudent," and revealed them to babes. Dear brethren, I believe God can and has revealed himself to some of his children without words. But let me ask now what the difference is between *permissive* decrees and *absolute* decrees, when the decreer would reap the benefit. For example, A has ample power to control the will and acts of B, and says to him, using all of his *absolute* power, "Take this key and rob the bank, and bring me the money." Again, C says to A, "If you will permit me, I will rob the bank and give you the money." Now I wish to ask, in which case is A the most to blame, in absolutely decreeing the robbery, or in partaking of the benefits of the permitted robbery? Answer this in whatever way we will, there is no law of justice that will excuse either act, the absolute decreed or the permitted robbery. The only way, therefore, to judge God is to bring him under law, or at least to divide his kingdom, like other Dualists, and admit the co-equality of Satan, and then we would find ourselves as much at a loss which to worship, as are those Pagans of the east who say, "A good

God will do us no harm;" they devote themselves to appeasing the wrath of their evil God. To admit, therefore, that there is a residue of power or authority for action in this little world of ours treasured up in the hand of Satan, I cannot. I must, I cannot help, believing in greater absoluteness than even the poet has expressed in the couplet,

"If devils move, 'tis by consent  
Of him who is omnipotent."

I can only conceive Satan as a created being, who, together with all other creatures, fill the places designed for them, and that for God's glory. I promised not to repeat, therefore the reader should review proofs already advanced by the brethren on these points. The dear child of God may sometimes feel to say, "These are hard sayings; who can hear them?" Well, dear saint, when your faith is tried like mine was, like Peter's was, like all the dear saints' are, you will, whoever you are, wherever you are, whatever you now believe, or feel, or experience, all say at last, in one long, loud and eternal shout of praise, "All things are ours;" "All things have worked together for our good." Can we not then afford to wait, though we wish time to hasten when all the hidings of God's power will be revealed in glory? You may suffer here. "It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing."—1 Peter iii. 17. Somebody must be your persecutors for the truth's sake, and must "Stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto they also were appointed."—1 Peter ii. 8. Jude also assures of the certainty of his faith that God had arranged, not permitted, ungodly men to creep in among the saints, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.—See fourth verse. Dear, doubting, trembling, fearful saint, since all these things are for you (and may I say for me also?) to experience, let them not discourage you. We sometimes feel to vent our feeble thoughts of distress in mournful numbers, and to sing the dark and dreary scenes through which we pass in cadences of grief; but these are all among the things appointed unto us, or we cannot claim a name among God's people; for they were "Chosen in the furnace of affliction." "And if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Are you weak in the faith? Be content till God shall grant your prayer, "Lord, increase our faith." Let a poor, trembling worm of the dust exhort you to peace in the churches, and not to make a brother an offender for a word. Do not ask the faithful ministry to shun to declare the whole counsel of God, even though you cannot be assured of all, until it is confirmed to you by your experience; neither deride a brother's faith until it is proved to be a heresy. But with such you should "keep no company, no, not to eat," or commune.

Dear brethren Beebe, if the foregoing is suitable, please publish it in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as a few of the wandering thoughts of a poor, wandering sinner, dependent upon the *wills* and *shalls* of God to keep me humble, and make known to the heirs of promise all that is in store for them.

Yours in tribulation,

A. B. BREES.

"COME unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."  
—Matt. xi. 28.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS:—The above passage of Scripture being much impressed upon my mind last night, and being much blessed with comfort and joy therefrom, I am led to express my thoughts on the same, as God shall give me ability. By the professing christian world this passage is considered strong ground for their free will, or that the creature may accept or reject God, as he chooses; and that the call and promise is to the world and people in general. Now, to the chosen and quickened vessel of mercy, whose footsteps have been guided and led in that path which few have trod, and who has tasted the sweet counsels of his God, in short, who has had some experience on that narrow road, it speaks words of comfort and joy. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Who is it that Christ calls to come unto him? First, it is all that labor; and, second, all that are heavy laden. We will consider first those that labor, and second those that are heavy laden, and then the promise that is to all such.

We understand by the word "labor" that a person continuing any length of time at such will become tired, and in need of rest. It is true that there are some kinds of labor which do not tire so quickly as others; nevertheless, constant application to any will make tired. The subject in question in the foregoing passage of Scripture is represented as laboring; laboring to come to Christ, or laboring to make himself right in the sight of God, or laboring to avoid all sin, that God may accept him? O no. What then? Laboring, struggling, sighing and grieving for the return of his beloved Lord and Savior; longing for a smile from his face, who seems for the time to have hid himself from him. He is in deep distress; truly he is laboring. The cry of his soul is, My Lord, my God, return; O embrace me in thy arms; fill me with thy Spirit; leave me not to this desolation, death and woe. Is the unregenerate soul ever found laboring in this way? No. Why? Because he never has any need to labor, as he is all the time rich and strong, and needeth not any more. He is at peace, because he whose he is troubles him not, knowing that he belongeth to him. Not so with this despised one who labors. His Lord has hid his face from him for a season, and permitted the ad-

versary to tempt and torment him with all sorts of evil, but never letting him be overcome; it simply being his beloved Master's own way of purging, cleansing and purifying him, and instead of severing, drawing him nearer to his precious Savior.

We now come to the second part—all those that are heavy laden. This differs only from the first in that, instead of laboring, they are heavy laden; meaning thereby, oppressed with a heavy load. Truly it is a heavy load, as every tried child of God does know. The load may present itself in various shapes and forms. It may be sin within; it may be oppression from friends and foes without, especially and more often those free will characters (vessels of wrath fitted to destruction). Be the same in whatever way, it is an oppressing load; and the subject would sink under the weight but for his blessed Savior, who walks, sits or stands, so to speak, as the case may be, beside his chosen and weary one, and stays him by an invisible hand, which the professing world cannot see; though the laden one, perhaps not at the time, but afterward, may be enabled to trace and remember the loving hand of his blessed Redeemer; and though at the time the load seemed to be crushing him on all sides, and his heavenly Father had left him and forsaken him, he cries from the inmost depths of his soul for God to help him and deliver him. To such an one are the comforting words of the blessed Redeemer addressed, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is a positive and unfailing evidence that they are his chosen and world-despised ones. As they do labor and are heavy laden, all by the hand of him whose they are, all these seeming oppressions are but blessings in disguise. Such the unregenerate soul does not know—these free will characters, whose end is destruction. They are not loaded or heavy laden; no, they are light and free. Not being God's children, they are not chastened, but they move on steadily to their destination, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. Their only heaven is upon the earth; and the earth is the only hell of those few who are on the narrow road to their Lord God.

We now come to the promise, "I will give you rest." This certainly must mean rest given to the weary and oppressed one while in this earthly tabernacle. This rest is realized when this tried one beholds the smile of his Savior turned upon him. He speaks to him by the Spirit words of comfort and joy, which neither tongue nor pen can describe, except in a very incoherent manner, and which cannot be known or understood by natural religionists, or those not born of the Spirit, because spiritually discerned. The subject of this rest, it may be, is at his daily vocation of life, or it may be that he is in the presence of a number of his

fellow-men; when he is filled with the power of his Savior God, and beholds him as it were by his side, in joy he rests in his arms, and his inmost soul is bubbling over with his glorious Redeemer's praise. He enjoys as it were a foretaste of that rest that remains for the children of God. He who has promised this rest is not man, nor the son of man, that he should lie; but he is the great God of heaven and earth, who cannot lie. It is not a promise of rest at some time, or that it may be given, or possibly will be given; but it is. "I will give you rest."

Dear reader, may God grant that your laboring is of that kind which the great I Am has promised to give rest to; and if you are one of those whose laboring is in vain, unless grace prevent, all your laboring emits but a stench in the nostrils of God, and will but add to your greater condemnation.

Unworthily yours,

W. C. MEDILL.

HUSTON, Ontario, Nov. 11, 1887.

STATE ROAD, Del., Dec. 2, 1887.

ELDER J. L. STATON—DEAR

FRIEND:—With a heavy heart I attempt to tell you with my pen some things that I cannot with my tongue. I have exerted all my strength to suppress my feelings, fearing I should deceive the children of my God. I have kept back the tears when I felt as if my heart would burst with the next throb, and then when alone by shedding tears I feel better for awhile. It is my nature to tell my worldly joys and sorrows, but I feel that I am too vile to speak of the subject that I think of so much. I must have relief some way, and will hope to get it by writing to you.

From childhood I had a desire to be good, and hoped I might die young, thinking the Lord would not hold me responsible then; but when I grew older I wished to live and be a Christian. I thought the Old Baptists were the true church of God, and I must wait until I was taught by the Spirit to understand. But I was not patient, for I wanted to be doing something; and the more I tried, the more deceitful I saw my heart growing. When I would get to thinking about the power of God, things would almost swim around me, and I would go out into the air and get my mind on something else, and try to be willing to let a mystery remain a mystery. Once I heard a preacher speak of two desires: one of mind, and one of the heart. I decided mine must be of the mind, and determined to stop thinking about it and to enjoy myself in the pleasures of the world. But I did not throw it aside. I got to feeling too sinful to read the Bible and the SIGNS, or to go to meeting. Baptist meeting, I mean. I would wonder why I thought they were right, and I was afraid it was because my people were Baptists.

Now my heart grows heavier when I think of the trials of last year. I

will not tell the particulars, but I dared question my Maker, why certain things had to take place. Last June a year ago, when I had the rheumatism, and could not turn over in bed, was when I submitted to the power of God, and felt like praising him. Then the thought came, Why praise him, for you are worse off than ever before? But without trying to answer, I could say, "Praise the Lord, O my soul." Ever since then, until during the past month, when I thought of such things as persons believing in absolute predestination, and not being reconciled to it, something seemed to say, "Peace, be still." This year has been the happiest of my life, for it has been my privilege to hear you preach often. And although you speak of not having liberty sometimes, your sermons are rich and comforting to me. I wish that I might hear you preach the remainder of my life. During this year I have at times forgotten my nothingness, and have had sweet meditations of the wonderful goodness of God; but just now I cannot express my feelings. There is more fear than anything else. I feel that a word or look of reproach from one of the flock would be more than I can stand.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

I am so miserable, I am surrounded by darkness, and my vile, ungrateful heart is sinking.

"Here on my soul a burden lies,  
No human power can it remove."

I cannot turn around nor get by. O where am I? I have been thinking about baptism, and cannot get my mind off it. Then I feel something say to me, "You are trying to take it in your own hands, and you will be punished for it. The Lord is not leading you, or you would not have so much carnal reasoning to contend with." I firmly believe I am separated from the world; but why should I desire to tell the church, when others so far my superior keep silent? I have written to you because I could not help it. I hope you will not think it strange because I could not talk instead of writing, for I felt dumb

L. R. MEREDITH.

GOLDENDALE, Wash. Ter.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have had the Christian experience of a sister (both naturally and spiritually) in my possession for nearly two years. I would be pleased to have it published in the SIGNS, if you see proper to do so. I have her consent to do with it as I will. I feel to read and to hear the old way of Christian travel. It is the plain path. It seems sometimes a land of pure delight, in comparison with some ways that are common in these days, when such numbers profess pure hearts, perfect love, entire sanctification, or lives of holiness. I feel like I have found a rest, as sometimes I hear of a few that are low down in the valley, like myself. Not that I do not desire a life free from everything that is sinful, or a life sanctified by trials and tribulation; but I find so much

in my nature foreign to holiness, that I cannot come to profess that exalted standard. It is only through the dear Father's mercies and tender compassion, which fail not, that I am not consumed. They are new every morning. "Great is thy faithfulness." The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him—to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a soul should both hope and wait, quietly wait, for the salvation of the Lord. When I took my pen to ask you to publish my sister's letter, I had no idea of writing more; but I am pleased to write of "wait." It keeps running in my mind, that joyful waiting on the Father. "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." But we have so often to wait, and by the rivers of Babylon to sit down. All was still with us. We could only weep when we remembered Zion.

"How tedious and tasteless the hours,  
When Jesus no longer I see."

"We hanged our harps on the willows." There was no use trying to sing of Zion in a strange land. We cannot patiently wait at times; but when we are at home spiritually how easy it is to say,

"Come, thou fount of every blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing thy praise."

We feel that our life, our health, and every friend, from our Father arise, and on him depend. Other refuge have we none. "Therefore I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my salvation." For we are now so strengthened that we can say with confidence, My God will hear me. "And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him."

V. C. CROOKS.

BARROW, Ill., Feb. 21, 1886.

MRS. CARRIE CROOKS—DEAR SISTER:—I will try and give you a reason of my hope in the Lord. As far back as I can remember I had serious thoughts. I knew I had to die, but the thought would soon pass away, until I was about fourteen years of age. One afternoon, about sunset, the thought struck me that the time had come for me to die, and I knew that I was not prepared. I thought my sins were so great that God never could forgive me, a sin-defiled creature as I was. I was out in the yard crying, when my old grandmother came to me to learn the cause of my grief. She tried to comfort me, but it did me no good. I remained in that condition for three or four weeks, in the daytime walking the yard and orchard, in the same aimless way, and tossing from side to side of the bed each night, fearing to go to sleep, lest I should awake in endless punishment. I was always breathing the same prayer, "God, be merciful to me, a poor sinner." But it seemed that my prayer availed

nothing. I thought my case was beyond all redemption. I could neither eat nor sleep. My grandmother sent me to an old friend of hers, a Missionary. She met me in the yard, and seemed to know of my trouble. She gave me her Bible, and told me to read it, and put my trust in the Lord, and not in the arm of flesh. She told me to lie down when I felt like it. That was in the forenoon. I read a chapter and laid down, and tried to sleep, but could not, my trouble was so great. I was like the prodigal son—my store was exhausted. I was as helpless as a babe, crying, "Lord, save, or I perish." About sunset I walked out in the yard, and turned to look at the setting sun, as I thought, for the last time. Language cannot express my feelings as I stood looking at the setting sun, with my arms folded across my breast, looking for my doom, when this passage of Scripture came to my mind, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." O what joy. I thought the trees, and vegetation, and everything living, seemed praising God. I thought my troubles all gone. But soon doubts arose in my mind, and something seemed to say, You are deceived. I had my associates, girls of nearly my own age, and often my heart would be sad and heavy when in this company. I would get the Bible and steal away to read. Sometimes it would relieve me, and at other times the darkness was so dense that there was not a ray of light, for my poor soul. I felt impressed to unite myself to the church, which I did, joining what they call "United Baptists," and was baptized, if my memory serves me right, the third Sunday in August, 1851. I only lived in that church a few months, and became dissatisfied, as they were not the people I wanted to be with. I called for my letter, which was granted; but, of course, it did me no good, as I knew the Old School or Predestinarian Baptists would not receive my baptism. So I remained out of the church nearly thirty years, when I could stand it no longer. I united with the Primitive Baptists, and was baptized.

Now, brother and sister, I have done the best I could, in my weak way, and I will say good-by, and remember me in your prayers.

Your affectionate sister,  
AMANDA McNAIL.

BUSSEY, Iowa, Dec. 1, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please insert the following notice in the SIGNS:

All clerks of the Western Association, and of the associations with whom we correspond, that have not received our Minutes yet, will notify me at once and I will supply them.  
WM. J. REEVES.

**CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.**

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please give notice in the SIGNS of my change of address. My address is now Magnolia Springs, Jasper County, Texas, instead of Cairo, Jasper County, Texas.  
D. RICHARDSON.

**EDITORIAL.**

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF  
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

**INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME LVI.**

As we enter upon this new year it is proper that we recall the memory of the wonderful display of divine goodness and mercy by which we have been sustained in the past. Not only have the common frailties which belong to the race of mortals been continually with us, but in addition to them in contending for the truth the saints have to meet the combined opposition of the world, the flesh and Satan. In this warfare it is not possible that there should be any truce, nor can any compromise be made between the opposing principles in the strife. Hence, in view of sensibly felt weakness it is not strange that the saints are constantly trembling with apprehension lest they shall at last be found too weak to resist the mighty foes by which they are surrounded. Having no strength in themselves, they are compelled to look alone to the Lord, not only for their eternal salvation from sin and death, but also for support in the daily strife which is ever raging in their members between the love of holiness and the law of sin which is in their members. All who know the power and the exceeding sinfulness of sin will readily confess their need of divine strength to give them the victory over the deceitful and persistent efforts of this strong enemy. Only by grace are any of the subjects of this strife able to overcome; therefore every victory received is a new ground for thankfulness to the Lord, who is alone able to give deliverance to the faint and feeble saints. For all the numberless manifestations of his goodness in keeping and sustaining us in the past we desire to have the spirit of thankfulness; and relying alone upon the same almighty arm for support in the future, we still propose to continue our labors in the service of those afflicted and poor people who have no other hope for salvation but in the sovereign grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Since not one of the stakes of Zion shall ever be removed, nor one of her cords broken, we are not prepared to depart from the doctrine of the gospel in any particular. This doctrine, as we have learned it in the school of Christ, has been steadfastly maintained by the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the past fifty-five years. The truth is the same as when it was revealed by faith to Abel; whatever deficiency has appeared in our manner of presenting it should be attributed to our weakness. All the glory is due to the Author of all truth, and all the shame of weakness and insufficiency justly belongs to ourselves.

No better promise for our future

conduct can be given than by referring to our course in the past. There are enough publications in existence seeking popularity by sacrificing truth, so that there is no occasion for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to enter upon that field. When it shall be found that there is no further need for the publication of gospel truth as God has revealed it, then it will be unnecessary to continue our labors. To the few lovers of that old-fashioned doctrine which ascribes salvation exclusively to the abounding grace of God, we look for aid in sustaining the publication of the first periodical ever issued in the defense of that truth. And in proof that we hold the same doctrine to which this paper was pledged in its first issue, we again present the statement of principles then laid down as briefly setting forth the doctrine of the inspired record. We still find these principles sustained by the Scriptures, and therefore have no disposition to retract any of them; nor can we consent to their being so modified as to render them more agreeable to carnal reason. A strict adherence to these sentiments may cost us the loss of patronage and popular favor; but this cannot deter us from adhering to sound doctrine as we have learned it in the school of experience, and as it is clearly revealed in the testimony which God has given in the Bible. To all who have hitherto rendered aid in support of our paper, whether by contributing to enrich our columns by their writings or in giving financial patronage, we would express most sincere gratitude, and earnestly request a continuance of their kindness. The future is dark with clouds which threaten active opposition against the principles of gospel truth, even among some who have heretofore professed to love the doctrine of God our Savior. It is important that all who are steadfast should be found standing together in the truth. To this end we earnestly request the assistance of all who hold the truth as expressed in the subjoined abstract of principles, to which our paper is still pledged, as it was in the time when the floods of false doctrine necessitated the withdrawal of the followers of Christ from the worldly multitude who had assumed the Baptist name. If any reader does not indorse this expression of principles, of course we have no right to ask his assistance. For terms, see Prospectus on page 9.

"The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah—the Revelation which God has given of himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. 'These Three are One.'—1 John v. 8.

"2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

"3. Eternal, Unconditional Election.

"4. The Total Depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

"5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the Elect only.

"6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and in all cases, Effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in Regenerating and Quickening the Elect of God.

"7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God, by Grace.

"8. The Resurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment.

"9. That the Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers—that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the Scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of Faith and Practice for the saints of God.

"10. That there is no connection between Church and State; and as touching the proposition for a marriage between them, the Hon. R. M. Johnson, in his Report on the Sabbath Question, has expressed our faith.

"The SIGNS OF THE TIMES will be decidedly opposed to Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath Schools, &c., &c., making war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions."

**THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.**

"FEAR not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke ii. 10, 11.

Since the omnipotent word of God called the world into existence, and established the order of nature by his covenant of the day and his covenant of the night, no such wonderful display of his almighty power has ever been shown to created intelligence as was announced in the message brought from the eternal throne by this highly favored angel. The fact that it was sent not to the proud and noble of the world, nor yet to those who could trust in themselves that they were righteous, but to humble shepherds, is very significant. It shows the estimate which is set upon all the pride of man in the true and just judgment of God. Thus does the Most High pour contempt upon the aspirations of the sinful heart of man. But there is a comforting truth by the finger of our God written in this fact. It shines forever in the firmament of the gospel heavens as a testimonial of the grace of God which bringeth salvation to the poor and the destitute; and also it is an expression of the manner in which it pleases the Lord to reveal that grace; that it is not in the light of assured confidence in his own worthiness, but in the dark and dreary watches of the night the conscious sinner receives the glad tidings that his sins are forgiven through the abounding grace which is in Christ Jesus. It is in this experimental application that we would consider this portion of the testimony of Jesus at this time.

"Fear not." In the preceding verse it is said that the shepherds unto whom this heavenly messenger was sent "were sore afraid." To them therefore this encouraging command was peculiarly appropriate. Indeed

they were prepared to receive this word as the beginning of the gospel of their salvation. To those Pharisees who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, there was no good tidings of great joy in this command to "Fear not." They were not in fear of any failure on their part to be approved in the sight of God. To them it would have been insulting rather than comforting to hear this direction. But there are some conscious sinners even now in time, who feel their need of such encouragement as is contained in this message to the shepherds. To all such this word is spoken by the authority of the sovereign Judge, who awards in righteousness to all created beings and things their final doom. To them the cheering word comes as it came to the shepherds, in the darkness of their gloomy night seasons, when they are no more expecting such a heavenly visitation than were the watching shepherds who were visited as recorded in the subject of which our text is a portion. Hence it is an evidence of divine favor when any conscious sinner is made to feel the fear which arises from a sense of pollution in the sight of the holy God. The blessings of the gospel of our gracious Redeemer are confined to such as are lost in condemnation; and when a sinner is enabled to see the justice of God in his condemnation he is just in the condition to receive the consolation of the gospel. While to those who are trusting in their own ability to save themselves from the judgment due to their sins this heavenly message could have brought no comfort, to all who felt their helpless condemnation there could be no sound so full of joy and consolation. To all such the whole gospel is contained in the message from heaven by which they are forbidden to fear. No such cheering word was spoken in that holy law which was given on Sinai; and in all the resources of nature nothing could be found which would dispel the awful terror inspired by the consciousness of guilt in the sight of that perfectly holy God who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and who "cannot look on iniquity."—Hab. i. 13.

But this word of the Lord is not only precious to the poor and helpless sinner in his first knowledge of his just condemnation; in all his subsequent experience he continually realizes the need of its abiding power to sustain him under all the trials and conflicts of his sojourn in this valley of the shadow of death. After experiencing the repeated manifestations of the unchanging faithfulness of the Lord in delivering him out of all his distresses in the past, the trembling and feeble saint still finds himself unable to rest upon the memory of those mercies; but in each succeeding trial he is compelled to cry unto the Lord for present deliverance. Thus this assuring "Fear not" must be the daily bread which

is ministered by the abounding grace of God to sustain every subject of his salvation through all the conflicts of this world. In looking back over all the way which he has been led by the Lord it is clearly manifest that the kind hand of his ever-present Redeemer has never failed to interpose at just the right time for the defeat of every attempt of the enemy for his destruction; still he needs the strengthening power of God to enable him to trust in the Lord no less when the last conflict comes than when he was first delivered by the present help of that omnipotent hand. In sore affliction and in deep distress he must learn the only source from whence his help can come; then he is prepared to testify from personal knowledge that "Salvation is of the Lord." Those who have never known their need of this cheering word of the Lord in their extremity of weakness and terror, cannot praise the riches of divine grace in that respect as those can who have known what it is to cry out of the depth of the low dungeon.—Lam. iii. 55. To such as have never felt the power of indwelling sin as forbidding their hope in the salvation of God, it is not needful that any strength above their own should be engaged in their confiding in that salvation. But to those who are led by the Spirit it is constantly demonstrated as Jesus taught his disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing." Reason would say that having once been taught this truth, there would be no need for them to learn it again; but in the experience of all the saints it is still as it was with Israel of old, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."—Isaiah xxviii. 10. Thus the Lord causes his people to be snared and taken in all their own devices; and when he has taught them the vanity of all their refuges of lies he causes them to flee for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them in the full and free salvation, for time and for eternity, which is in Christ Jesus finished and complete. In consideration of the everlasting righteousness of God which is given to them in their Lord, they are justified from all things from which there was no hope for justification by works of their own under the law. Since finite intelligence could discover no way in which justice could be satisfied, and the sinner saved from his sins, it is clear that the conscious sinner must be oppressed with most distressing fear. To him in the depth of despair this living word of the Lord comes with power to dispel the gloomy clouds of sin and death, and delivers him from all fears. Then for the first time he hears the joyful sound of the gospel of the grace of God, by which sinners are saved. He does not have to resort to reason in order to determine whether this is the gospel, nor yet can all the wisdom of this world decide for him whether he is inter-

ested in the good tidings. The word

is spirit and it is life; therefore all who hear it are quickened by it, and in them is written the indelible testimony of that word of the Lord which liveth and abideth forever, witnessing that they are born of God. For their learning, and not to make the truth more certain in the sight of God, the saints must be subjected to severe trials. In this way they learn the everlasting strength of that faith by which our God has declared that the just shall live. It does not matter though all the things which appear to natural sight may forbid the joy of believing that which is thus revealed; the faith of the operation of God rejoices in the full confidence that God will fulfill all that he has promised. To natural sight, when the flesh and heart of the saint shall fail, there is no room for assurance to rest upon; but faith looks beyond all this, and sees that "God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."—Psalm lxxiii. 26. In this abiding fruit of the Spirit the saints have the angel of the presence of the Lord, which saves them in every time of trial. Hence, in every trial and conflict through which they are called to pass they are by this angel admonished and encouraged to "Fear not."

"For, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." Since the Lord has spoken good concerning his spiritual Israel, it must necessarily follow that all events are included in that purpose of love in which he fulfills that gracious word. It was not the way which would have seemed right to a natural man that the Lord from heaven should have submitted to the humiliation of being made under the law, and bearing the sins of all his people in his own body on the cross. Yet when the risen Savior opened the understanding of his desponding disciples, he said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."—Luke xxiv. 46, 47. When the disciples saw their Lord nailed to the cross it was to them conclusive evidence that they had been mistaken in thinking that he was the Redeemer of Israel. They could not see in it the fulfillment of the good tidings announced by the angel in this text; yet it was not only that which in the just judgment of God "behooved Christ," but thus it was written in the Scriptures and in the purpose or word of God which is forever settled in heaven.—See Psa. xxii. 1-22; Isa. i. 6; liii. 1-10. Without this dreadful manifestation of the wickedness of man in fulfilling the Scriptures by crucifying the Lord of life, all that was decreed as the result of that suffering must have been a failure. Hence even this was included in the "good tidings" which the angel was sent from the eternal throne to proclaim to the poor shepherds. So in the present experience of the saints, much of their path is

in thick darkness, and many times they are called to drink deeply of the bitter waters of affliction; but in it all there is only the fulfillment of the "good tidings of great joy" to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose, since the will of God is their only comfort and joy. None can truly pray that the will of God be done, except those who are thus led by the Spirit to rejoice in that will. It is mockery for any to speak the words, "Thy will be done," while really desiring to dictate to the Lord what they would have him to do.

While it was unquestionably a literally real visitation from heaven to those shepherds, and they did hear the glorious proclamation of the birth of the Lord Jesus, the same revelation in spirit is made to every one who is led by the Spirit to trust in the salvation of which the angel testified in the language of our text. Without this experimental knowledge of the coming of Christ in the flesh there can be no real trust in him for salvation. So all the children of Zion individually shall be taught of the Lord. This is the source of their "great peace." When they are following any other teaching they are sure to be involved in confusion; but in this instruction which they receive from the Lord they "all speak the same things." To every one this gospel of Christ testifies the coming of a perfect "Savior which is Christ the Lord." They never receive this message in the form of an offer of salvation conditioned upon their action in accepting or refusing its benefit. Such a proposition could not be called "good tidings of great joy" even to those who received it. If there were any beneficial results derived from accepting such an offer, they should be attributed to the discretion of the sinner in accepting the offer, and not to the message proclaiming it. But in the gospel of salvation by grace through the blood of Jesus, all the work is complete in him; and the word by which this joyful truth is proclaimed to the sinner in his conscious guilt is indeed "good tidings of great joy" to him; for it is the revelation of life and liberty in perfect holiness, instead of that guilt and condemnation under which he was groaning in hopeless death. To bring such a message was the high privilege of the favored angel whom the shepherds heard; and the same holy angel still speaks in every revelation of that salvation to any sinner. This is the same angel who was seen by John, as recorded in his vision, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."—Rev. xiv. 6, 7. All gospel preach-

ing presents the truth and justice of God in perfect harmony with the display of infinite grace in the salvation of lost sinners. And this gospel is not limited to any nation or class of sinners, but is gloriously revealed to all in every place who are made to call upon the name of the Lord. Therefore it is declared in the text:

*"Which shall be to all people."* Under the legal dispensation all the messages sent by the Lord were limited to that nation of Israel whom God had chosen for his own peculiar people; hence the enlarged application of the message of this angel has great importance to the "all people" included in its comforting tidings. Throughout the prophetic dispensation this wonderful extension of the display of divine favor was repeatedly foretold; yet when God fulfilled that promise it was needful that even the apostles should be instructed by special revelation concerning it. The manner in which this was done is clearly stated by Paul in writing to the Gentile saints.—See Ephesians ii. 11-22. It is one of the peculiar and characteristic glories of the gospel of Christ that it is confined to no nation nor class of men in its saving benefits. Thus this joyful proclamation is "to all people." So Peter said at the house of Cornelius, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts x. 34, 35. While this gospel is thus proclaimed to all people, it is not a source of great joy to all who hear the literal word of it. To Herod and all Jerusalem with him it brought trouble.—Matthew ii. 3. And so all carnal religionists have been troubled by it in all ages since Cain slew his brother. It is only as made a joy by the teaching of the blessed Comforter that this message from heaven is "good tidings of great joy" to any sinner.

*"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."* As this message was announced in the midst of the shining glory of the Lord on that memorable night, so all to whom it is given to hear the glorious gospel of salvation from their sins will ever receive the good tidings in the full consciousness of the light which makes manifest their own utter vileness in awful contrast with the beauty of holiness revealed in divine justice. This will always forbid the presumption on their part which would claim any merit in themselves as the ground of their salvation. So in this revelation boasting is excluded, and the only trust of the sinner must ever be in the unsearchable depth of the abounding grace of God. The literal fulfillment of the promise of God in the manifestation of Christ in the likeness of sinful flesh can never cease to be a theme for grateful adoration in them who are made to know the need of such a Savior. All who know him in this experimental sense as their Redeemer, are thus

qualified to testify to the truth that in this Savior born unto the shepherds in the city of David God was manifest in the flesh. They know that he was the very Holy One to whom all the prophets give witness. None can know this without that revelation from God which enabled Peter to say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Therefore every one who has this knowledge has heard and learned of the Father, and consequently all such come unto Jesus.—John vi. 45. Jesus had just said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;" and "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." So in this discourse alone, without reference to the many other plain declarations of inspired testimony, the whole doctrine of the gospel is abundantly sustained. The denial of definite and particular election, absolute and unchangeable predestination, or the certain salvation of all the chosen people of our God, in positive terms contradicts the express statements of our Lord in this discourse. As Jesus *was born a Savior*, it is absurd to question the perfection of that work by which he has demonstrated his power to save. Failure to save one of those whom he came to save would disprove his right to the name JESUS, which was given expressly to designate him as the Savior of sinners. And it is only as that Savior that he is "Christ the Lord." Thus the salvation of every one of his people is essential to the preservation of his own sacred name and immaculate purity and truth.

#### A WORD TO CORRESPONDENTS.

AS AN explanation of our failure to insert some articles sent for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we will present some principles which have been deduced from long experience in publishing a paper for general correspondence among the lovers of gospel truth.

First. The avowed object of issuing the paper is the circulation of that testimony of the word in which the experience of the saints is presented in glorious harmony with the truth of revelation, by which they may be comforted who hope in the grace of God for salvation. Clearly it would be unjust to those who have subscribed for the paper expecting it to be devoted to that end, if it were filled with something else. Some esteemed brethren have written such articles as to us appear to be unprofitable outside of the immediate vicinity where they are written; such would be of no interest to a large majority of our patrons.

Second. Sometimes articles otherwise acceptable are spoiled by being protracted unreasonably with immaterial and irrelevant incidents, of interest to no one but the writer, whose publication would fail to bring either comfort or instruction to the

readers. A little reflection will show that we cannot do justice to our patrons in admitting such contributions to the exclusion of others, which are of universal interest to the saints as treating of the wonders of grace as revealed in the salvation of sinners. While personal regard for the writers would incline us to insert their articles, honesty toward the great mass of our patrons forbids such a course.

Third. Many valuable letters are so mingled with references to local or personal troubles as to be unprofitable for publication. In most of these cases their insertion as written would involve the SIGNS in an endless and unproductive controversy. It is manifest that no good end can be subserved by publishing such writings.

Fourth. As an explanation of delay in the insertion of excellent communications, it is frequently occasioned by the necessity of copying them before they can be safely entrusted to the compositor. This may as often be in consequence of very ornamental penmanship, as from such as the writer would confess to be illegible. So the best educated writers often fall into as serious errors in language as any other contributors to the press. Regard for the contributors as well as for the cause of truth forbids that such errors should be exposed to the public by insertion without correction.

Fifth. The most important and serious objection to the insertion of every article furnished for publication is that in so doing the paper would soon be filled with such matter as would neither be consistent with sound doctrine nor in harmony with the experience of the saints.

In consideration of these and many other points which might be presented, it is necessary to discriminate among the letters submitted to us for publication. Doubtless errors have been committed by us in making the proper selection, both in admitting some things which might better have been withheld, and in rejecting some which should have appeared. Without immediate inspiration it would be presumptuous to deny our liability to error. We only claim that it is our desire to give testimony to the truth as revealed in the Scriptures and as taught in the experience of the saints. Trusting to the forbearance which has hitherto been so generously extended to us by our brethren, and relying on the unfailing power of divine grace for support and guidance, we earnestly solicit a continuance of the correspondence which has done so much to enrich the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in the past. And may the Spirit lead us all in the pathway of light and life.

#### PROSPECTUS FOR VOLUME LVI.

HAVING been continued to the present time in publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and relying on the sustaining power of him who we trust has helped us hitherto, with this

number we commence our fifty-sixth volume, and with an entire new dress. The type is large-faced long primer and brier; and with ink costing about four times that which is usually used on newspapers, and paper costing nearly twice that which is ordinarily used, we furnish our readers with a very handsome sheet. As to the matter which the paper will contain, we can give no better guarantee than to refer our subscribers to the past volumes of more than half a century.

It has been suggested by a few of our brethren that we publish the SIGNS in pamphlet form; but the objection to this is that there is too much space wasted in margins around each page. A column of the SIGNS contains about as much as a page and a half of a pamphlet the reading matter of which is four by seven inches; or the whole forty-eight columns as much as a pamphlet containing seventy such pages. In its present form the SIGNS contains more reading matter for the subscription price than any paper of our order published in this country.

Our terms will remain the same as given in our advertisement on page 12; but partially to repay our subscribers for their time and trouble, in procuring for us new subscribers, we will from now until April first, 1888, make the following offer in

#### CASH PREMIUMS.

To any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

These terms, brethren, are really below what we can afford; but if by this means we shall double our subscription list, and by a little effort on the part of our subscribers it can be done, we will then lower our subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents per year, and run the single sheet of eight pages weekly. Let each subscriber see what he can do.

#### LARGE HYMN BOOK FOR A DOLLAR, SIX FOR FOUR DOLLARS AND A HALF.

We have just had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

#### A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

We also have the small type book bound in cloth, which we will send post paid at price stated above. Cash must always accompany the orders. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

## POETRY.

## THE OLD YEAR'S DEAD.

BY JOSEPH C. BELL.

'Tis midnight's still and solemn hour, and now  
The weary world is wrapt in silent sleep;  
And o'er the sorrowing, sad or mirthful  
brow,  
Angels of peace their holy vigils keep.  
Hark! the mournful sound of the deep-  
toned bell  
Drifts on the air, re-echoing far and near;  
As its funeral notes on the bleak winds  
swell,  
We know 'tis the knell of the dying year.  
The clock strikes twelve—the old year's  
dead! It seems  
I feel the heavens tremble as he yields  
his breath;  
And on the sombre sky there dimly  
gleams  
A palid radiance that proclaims his death.  
I fancy that I hear the muffled fall  
Of unseen feet that bear away his bier;  
And many mourners linger round the  
pall,  
To breathe a farewell to the dead old  
year.  
A melancholy wail floats through the air,  
Like distant music of Æolian harps;  
How plaintive, low and sad, now loud and  
clear—  
'Tis but the north wind's requiem o'er the  
corpse.  
The old year's gone; and in his short  
career  
How many changeful scenes did he be-  
hold!  
Bright spring, summer, autumn, and  
winter sere,  
All lived and died ere his few days were  
told.  
'Tis now a time to muse upon the past,  
And yield one's self to memory's mystic  
spell;  
And as our silent thoughts are backward  
cast,  
What varied feelings in the bosom swell!  
A spectre grim is standing by our side  
With hour-glass and scythe, and with a  
sigh  
He lifts the coffin lid of love and pride,  
Of joy and hope, then quickly passes by.  
O! tireless time, whose ceaseless onward  
course  
Is marked by flying years, that quickly  
fade,  
Hast thou no bitter feelings of remorse  
Whilst gazing on the wreck thy hand has  
made?  
Behold, within the year just passed away,  
What havoc thou hast spread throughout  
the land!  
Thou'st left thy impress on the sad and  
gay,  
And scattered seeds of woe with reckless  
hand.  
We see thy hand-prints on the moldering  
wall,  
The crumbling rock, and on the dying  
wood;  
Before thy glittering scythe all things  
must fall—  
Thou sparest not the evil or the good.  
The peasant's hut, the palace of the great,  
Have each some sad memento of the year.  
The pauper, prince, and minister of state,  
Lie side by side in one cold sepulchre.  
Thus it will ever be while day and night  
Visit the earth, and seasons wax and  
wane;  
Till he who gave command, "Let there  
be light,"  
Shall speak the world to chaos back again.  
The years will come and go, and each  
will bear  
Its meed of joy and woe, as erst before;  
"The gay will laugh, the solemn brood  
of care  
"Plod on," until old time shall be no  
more.  
SALISBURY, Md.

## OBITUARY NOTICES.

By request of the Fairview Old School Baptist Church I will send a notice of the sad death of **Elder Thomas Reese**, who departed this life on the tenth day of November, 1887. He was living with his step-son-in-law at the time of his death. On the day named, after the family had eaten dinner, his son-in-law, brother John F. Johnson, with his son, and a neighbor of his, started to the mountain a short distance to look for game; and when they started they saw Elder Rose start away; but supposing he was going to brother Lake's they paid no attention to him. After they arrived at the mountain they saw smoke and fire breaking through the barn roof. Returning back as soon as possible, and during the burning Elder Rose not being about, inquiry was made to know where he was. Search was made for him, and after the barn was about burned down his body was discovered lying on the ground, with his head and limbs all consumed. How the accident happened will remain a mystery.

Elder Rose moved into the bounds of the Juniata Association about the close of the late war, and took the pastoral charge of three churches, which he served as best his age would permit, as he was about seventy-eight years of age. His early life was spent in Ohio and the western counties of Pennsylvania. He spent about forty-seven years in the gospel ministry. On the first Saturday of April, 1872, he organized the Fairview Church, and took charge of said church, and baptized in her fellowship about twenty-four members. He served the church faithfully up to the time of his death, with the exception of about two years, when Elder Beeman served them. The church deeply laments the loss of their faithful pastor, as the churches are left entirely destitute, not a minister being left in the bounds of the Juniata Association. May the Lord be with his dear companion, who is truly a mother in Israel, and with all his children and mourning friends, and finally save them in his everlasting kingdom.

ALSO,

By request of our dear brother, Samuel Mellott, I will send a notice of the death of his dear companion, **Rachel Mellott**, who was born July 10, 1821, and died November 14, 1887. Our dear sister was baptized in the fellowship of Sidling Hill Church, about forty years ago, I think, by Elder Moses Starr, where she remained a humble and consistent member for many years. But a difficulty arising in the Sidling Hill Church, with the pastor, she withdrew with several others and went to the Fairview Church, where she remained a bright example of christian piety until her death. She was the mother of nine children (six sons and three daughters), two sons and two daughters dying before their mother, leaving her husband, our dear brother, in his old age to wrestle with the cares of life alone; and yet he is not alone, because of that blessed Jesus who has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." Our beloved brother was baptized in the fellowship of the Sidling Hill Church in June, by our beloved pastor, Elder E. V. White, of Virginia.

Your brother in hope of life eternal,  
AHIMAZ MELLOTT.

NEEDMORE, Pa.

**DIED**—On April 27, 1887, **John Currey**, at his residence near Webster, Taylor County, West Va., in the seventy-third year of his age. He was born May 26, 1814, professed a hope in Christ in the pardon of his sins, and was baptized, with his amiable companion, by Elder Edmund Dennison, May 6, 1843, was ordained deacon of the church August 5, 1854, and continued steadfast in the doctrine of the Bible, as believed and taught

by the Primitive Baptists, until the day of his death. True, he complained of being under darkness for some days prior to his departure, and at times was not in his right mind; and thus the enemy circulated a report that he was not willing to die on the doctrine which he professed to believe. Hearing of this, and also that he greatly desired to hear the truth once more, which he so dearly loved, I sent an appointment, which was three days before he died. They turned his face toward where I stood. I used the 45th, 46th and 63d verses of the third chapter of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, for some remarks. I was talking over an hour, showing that the people of God have to pass through great tribulation to reach the celestial country. Not a groan was heard from the dying man during all this time, though he had been very restless before, and had to be turned in his bed every few minutes. He spoke of seeing his little grandson, Albert Willhide, who died a few days before he did. Both died about half-past two o'clock in the evening. Brother Currey was a faithful member in his church, ever ready to assist in paying her expenses. He told me that he could not be satisfied to let his church house go down; and as the old house was much decayed, he had it taken down, and a beautiful new house erected on the site, and saw the last dollar paid for its erection before his demise. There he lay in his coffin, while the unworthy writer talked from his pulpit, perhaps an hour and a half, upon the text found in Luke xx. 35, 36, after which he was laid in the tomb, by the side of his beloved wife, who had gone before six or seven years. They left several children to mourn their loss; but it is his eternal gain. There is no doubt about that, in my mind. O how we miss him. He was always at his post, and his house was ever open to entertain his brethren and friends. But the Lord called him, and he had to go to his eternal home, where the wicked cease to trouble, and the weary be at rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."—Heb. iv. 9.

J. S. CORDER.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 10, 1887.

ANOTHER old soldier of the cross is called to lay his armor by and enter that better country, that city that has no need of the sun, neither of the moon; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

**Elder Lott Southard** died Nov. 24, 1887; was seventy-six years of age the fifteenth of October. For many years he had been subject to disease of the lungs. But two days before his departure he had a hard fall that hurt his hip and side, and made him a helpless, but patient, sufferer. I sat by his bedside the last day of his earthly life. In the midst of his sufferings he looked up and commenced quoting, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." When he stopped speaking, a smile spread over his pale face, and I have no doubt but he fully realized the strong props on which he rested, and the sweetness of that faith in Jesus he had confessed over forty years ago. He was a great Bible reader, and was very able in the pulpit, and very much cast down when the sermon was ended; more so, apparently, than any other minister I ever knew. He moved here with his family from Ohio more than thirty years ago. He was married in that state, May 23, 1834, to Maria Ann Fullerton, a faithful, patient, loving wife, who is left lonely indeed. But the Lord has promised to be the widow's God. He, with our beloved pastor, Elder M. M. Vancleave, have served our church at Crawfordsville faithfully for many years. But now he is gone, and his trials and afflictions are

over. The church has lost a faithful member. We shall see his face no more, nor hear his voice in our assemblies; but he has left his admonitions, and though dead, he yet speaketh to us. As I stood beside his coffin and looked at his calm, peaceful face, that seemed to reflect a halo of that brighter world, pleasant memories of the past came rushing to my full heart. Those lips, now forever silent, had spoken so many comforting words of gospel truth to the poor and needy. Those dear hands had broken bread for so many thousand little ones. At our last monthly meeting (in November), after a feeling prayer, he read,

"There is a land mine eye hath seen,  
In visions of unraptured thought,  
So bright that all which spreads between  
Is with its radiant glory fraught."

He read the four verses, and remarked, "This is a favorite of mine."

Elder M. M. Vancleave preached on the funeral occasion, from the text, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," &c. Then many neighbors and friends bore his precious remains to their last resting place.

Sorrowfully,

LINA W. BECK.

**BROTHER Griffin Kelly**, of Spring Hill, Henry Co., Ky., a member for many years of Mt. Pleasant Church, at Pleasureville, died Tuesday, Nov. 1st, at four o'clock a. m., of general debility, having been in declining health more or less for about two years. Brother K. was in his seventy-ninth year, and a wealthy and honored citizen. He leaves an aged widow, two sons and one daughter, all married, with families, one deceased daughter leaving a family of children. Dr. C. W. Kelly is a citizen of Louisville, Ky., and honorably connected with one of the medical faculties. Brother I. W. Kelly is connected with the Internal Revenue Department, his home being at New Castle, this county. Mrs. Hellen Swift, a very estimable lady, also lives near New Castle. Brother K. was faithful in every department of life in which he acted, and retained an unclouded mind to the end; and will, though ripe in years, be much missed as husband, father, &c. The loss of his sound counsel in the church seems almost irreparable. To the writer, in his ministrations of the gospel, he has been ever faithful and gentle, giving words of comfort in times of trouble and conflict, and being the one making a motion to recognize his gift by license. Also, one year later (1870), he made a motion to call for his ordination; and in 1883 he made a motion to call him as pastor, in conjunction with our venerated Samuel Jones, who soon after was gathered to his fathers. Later, he has still stood by him in time of need. The writer should ever feel grateful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, as he gave one so faithful for the truth's sake, and who so remained until death did us part in the flesh; but I hope we are still one in spirit, though he is gone where

"There sweeps no desolating wind  
Across that calm, serene abode;  
The wanderer there a home shall find  
Within the paradise of God."

The writer was called to speak on the occasion of his funeral, at one o'clock p. m., Nov. 2d, to a large and solemn congregation of relatives and friends, from Psalm cxxvi. 6. Surely our dear brother seemed as a ripe sheaf taken home by the Lord of the harvest.

The remains were interred in Eminence Cemetery, there to await the final call, when this mortal shall put on immortality, while the spirit returns to God, who gave it. May God bless the bereaved ones, is our prayer, for Jesus' sake.

Yours in affliction and sorrow,

J. M. DEMAREE.

NORTH PLEASUREVILLE, Ky., Nov. 4, 1887.

**DIED**—At her late residence in Alexandria, Va., Oct. 21st, 1887, sister **Joyce Ann Fisher**, in the sixty-seventh year of her age.

The deceased was born near Manassas, in Prince William County, Va., and was baptized by the late Elder Joseph L. Purington in 1870. Sister Fisher had been in failing health for some time, but her death was sudden and unexpected to many of us. She had been a lover of gospel truth for many years, and finally came to the church, seeking a home. As long as her health would permit, her seat was seldom vacant at the stated meetings of the church. She came at a time of some spiritual enjoyment and prosperity in the travel of the church in Alexandria, under the ministry of Elder Purington. She came with several others preceding and following her in baptism, the most of whom have followed their faithful pastor to their long, eternal home. How rapidly are written in the pathway of time the everlasting decrees, and unfolded the mystery of the purpose which our God has purposed in himself toward his chosen children!

“Life, death, and hell, and worlds unknown,  
Hang on his firm decree.”

Sister Fisher leaves four children to mourn their loss in her death. May it be blessed to their good. “The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” We rejoice to know that all things are in his hands, and in the heavenly assurance of the resurrection of the dead.

ALSO,

**DIED**—At his late home in Fluvanna Co., Va., Feb. 13th, 1887, **Mars Lewis**, in the thirty-third year of his age.

The subject of this notice was the eldest son of Mr. F. M. Lewis, in Prince William Co., Va., and was born in Prince William County, August 6th, 1854. He leaves his wife and three children, besides his parents, two sisters and five brothers, with other relatives and many friends, to mourn his death. Mr. Lewis is spoken of as a young man of many noble qualities of character, beloved and respected among his acquaintances. His death falls with crushing weight upon his parents, who are lovers of gospel truth, and his mother a member of Bethlehem Church, Prince William County; but these great afflictions, which roll in upon the christian's life like mighty waves of fearful gloom, are ever tempered with the love and mercy of God.

“Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up his bright designs,  
And works his sovereign will.”

He directs all in eternal wisdom and infinite love. From the lowest depths, when our hearts are overwhelmed, we cry unto him, and he hears the cry of the desponding, helpless, distressed child. When we reach the end of the dark, deep, mysterious way, we shall find at last that Jesus has done all things well. Not this side of a long and vast eternity shall the shadows forever flee and the sunshine appear. In the precious family circle the blessed Redeemer sits enthroned in life eternal, whose ways are ways of peace and pleasantness, and his words full of comfort to the weary, heavy laden child.

Yours to serve in bonds of gospel grace,  
WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Dec. 8, 1887.

**DIED**—May 4th, 1887, at his new home in Kansas, Martin County, our much beloved brother, **William F. McKay**.

Our brother, who was much beloved for the truth's sake, was born in Ohio, in January, 1833, and was joined in marriage to Elizabeth Peterson, of Ohio, October 20th, 1856. He became a member of the Mercer's Run Church by the relation of his hope in Christ, and was baptized on the third Sunday in December, 1869, and in April, 1876, he was made Clerk of the church. Our brother was a constant at-

tendant at all the meetings of the church, and enjoyed much the company of his brethren. His home was a very pleasant one to all the Baptists, especially those of the ministry, who were always welcome under his hospitable roof. It seemed to be a great pleasure to him, while in the company of his brethren, to talk of the things of the kingdom of our God. In his manner he was not one who would make of himself what he was not. He was kind, forgiving, loving and forbearing to those who would oppose themselves. When the news of his death reached the church, at the time of their regular meeting, it seemed almost like a funeral. We are told by his esteemed wife, sister McKay, that as he was nearing the end he spoke of that everlasting inheritance awaiting him, and much desired to depart and be with Christ.

The church, on learning of his death, passed the following as a tribute of love and respect, which please insert with this.

I remain your brother, as ever, in gospel bonds,

LEVI BAVIS.

Mt. Sterling, Ohio, Nov. 9, 1887.

WHEREAS, It has pleased our God in his all-wise providence to remove from our midst our beloved brother in the faith, and respected friend and neighbor, **William F. McKay**; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That while we miss him in his constant presence at our meetings, with his kind words and faithful actions as a brother in the faith, we bow in humble submission to the bereaving hand of our God, knowing that what he does is ever best. Though we are not always able to see why, yet we would say, Thy will be done.

We hereby express our heartfelt sympathy and fellowship for our dear sister and the dear family who are called thus to mourn the absence of a kind, christian husband and a beloved father; and our prayer is that he who has thus bereaved them will be a Husband to the widow and a Father to the fatherless, and bless and sanctify this dispensation of his providence to their and our good.

Done by order and in behalf of the church, at her regular meeting for business, the fourth Saturday in July, 1887.

LEVI BAVIS, Mod.

ADONI JONES, Clerk.

**DIED**—At the residence of her mother, in this city, Sunday, June 12th, 1887, of consumption, **Miss Jane J. Cranfill**, aged 30 years, 10 months and 30 days.

Miss Cranfill was a graduate of the State University, and had taught with credit to herself in many public schools in this State. Her health failing, she went to California a few months since, but without avail, and returned home only to die. Miss Cranfill was universally beloved and esteemed by all who knew her, and they will hear with deep regret of her death.—*Eugene City Guard*.

The subject of this notice was born near Oregon City, August 1st, 1856. She was the youngest daughter of Elder Isom and Matilda L. Cranfill. She was engaged in teaching school at Springfield in the winter of 1886, when her health failed so far that she could not finish her school. In May she went to Grant's Pass, Oregon, and spent the summer. In October she came home to Eugene City, her health still no way improved. She still had hope that somewhere in California would be found the desired result; so, accompanied by her mother, they started immediately for Los Angeles, California, stopping there two months; but some form of malarial fever seized her there, and for a time her life was despaired of. But she got able to travel, and her physician advised her to go to Colton, San Bernardino County. I will now extract a paragraph from her last letter to me: “I certainly never saw people so kind. This is a healthful location, high up, near the

mountains. Colton has drawn its inhabitants from the sick, and most of them remain if they recover, and become very sympathetic. Almost every day I receive something from some of them. It really takes away half the pain of sickness; and when I am not suffering pain I am just about happy. I have so many pleasant thoughts.”

She found she could not recover, and wanted to get home again. They got her home just two weeks and five days before she died. She was still able to walk about the house and yard after she got home; but on the morning of June 12th she was breathing as easily and softly as an infant on its mother's breast, until ten o'clock, when her spirit went to God. She was a member of the Missionary Baptists. She experienced a hope some eight years ago.

V. C. CROOKS.

GOLDENDALE, Wash. Ter.

In the person of **Elder T. W. Hutchens**, the church at New Salem, Colloway Co., is now mourning the loss of her pastor of long standing, who, on the 28th day of July, 1887, according to the unerring course of divine providence, yielded to the divine edict, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

He was liberated by the Regular Baptist Church, and having given full proof of a call to the work of the ministry, was regularly ordained to the work. As a gospel minister, he was certainly sound in the faith. He was happily instructive and edifying. He showed no disposition to compromise the truth. His remarkable labors were not confined alone to his church, but abounded throughout Soldier Creek Association. He also visited many associations and localities in different states, receiving the indorsement of the Regular Baptists wherever he went. His walk was such as to evidence the truth, “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” As a husband, a father and a neighbor he was a model in his community. He served his country as a soldier in the war between the United States and Mexico. He was, for many years, Moderator of Soldier Creek Association. The points of doctrine he advocated were election, predestination, effectual calling and final preservation of the saints, and salvation by the grace of God in Christ Jesus the Lord. About two days before his death he gave utterance to the following statement:

“I, T. W. Hutchens, a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, do wish to say to my friends and christian brethren of the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ, that I have for about thirty years advocated the doctrine of unconditional salvation according to the election of grace, and before the world was; and if I or any other sinner ever enter and enjoy heaven's pure world, it will be through the blood and righteousness of the Son of God.” Evidently our loss is his eternal gain.

His bereaved companion and children have the sympathy of the Baptists. O that the Lord may bless them.

J. M. PERKINS.

ONCE more I am called upon to offer a tribute to the memory of another mother in Israel. Sister **Luatta Ball** died in August, 1887, after an illness of about six weeks. She was born Jan. 21, 1805, making her eighty-two years of age. Sister Bell was one of the oldest members of the Primitive Baptist Church in Crawfordsville, Indiana. She was a loving, faithful, consistent member, always trying to fill her seat at all our meetings. She told me she remembered when the church was constituted in her father's house, in 1823, and she joined the church soon after. Two years ago she went to live with her children in another state, too far from a church for her to attend worship. She said, “I was very comfortable with my children, and pleasantly situated; but

Jerusalem was my chief joy. I longed for the fellowship of the saints.” So she returned, and was with us at our last June meeting, and seemed so glad to be with us once more. Before we met again she was taken sick, and when I visited her she said, “Tell brother Vancleave and brother Southerd to come, and all the rest of the church. I love them all, and want to see them.” The next time I called to see how she was, she told me she never would meet with us in the church again. I asked if she was ready and willing to go. She answered, with a smile, “I am ready.” She died peacefully, and we cannot doubt she is now in the presence of her blessed Savior she loved so much while here below.

“Think, O my soul, if 'tis so sweet  
On earth to sit at Jesus' feet,  
What must it be to wear a crown,  
And sit with Jesus on a throne.”

The dear children and brothers and sisters are lonely without the kind mother; but the Lord knows best, and he will send the Comforter.

Elder M. M. Vancleave, her dear old pastor, spoke many comforting words to the mourners at the funeral. Then we laid her away to rest in the beautiful cemetery.

LINA W. BECK.

**DIED**—At the residence of her son-in-law, **Mrs. Lucretia Mechame**, in the eighty-third year of her age.

Our aged sister was the widow of the late Dr. Richard Mechame, whom she had survived some sixteen years. There are still many living who will remember them both, as it was a Baptist home for many years. She died October 20th, 1887. She was baptized by Elder Eli Scoll, in 1832, uniting with the church at Harford, where she continued in full fellowship for over half a century (I believe fifty-five years), having lived to see all that generation to which she belonged called home, with very few exceptions, and having as good a recollection, probably, of the travel of the church in this county as any one now living. Sister Mechame was one who seemed to manifest with her years a growth in grace, stronger and stronger in faith unto the end, growing more patient in endurance, warm in her expressions of love and fellowship for those she loved for the truth's sake. Her memory for some years before her death was defective, but in the things of the gospel it was bright and clear. We feel in looking at the case that a ripe shock of corn has been gathered home in its season. One son and daughter composed her family. The son died some years ago. The daughter survives her, with several grandchildren. Her remains were laid to rest at the Old Harford meeting-house, with some remarks on the occasion by the writer of this notice, to a solemn and listening assembly. We feel that her last end was peaceful and calm. We are not without hope that the daughter will by faith be led in the footsteps of the devoted mother. Together with the husband and children, we feel deeply interested.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

**Susan Howard**, of Howardsville, Illinois, departed this life November 16th, 1887, in the eightieth year of her age.

The subject of this notice has been a member of the Old School Baptist Church since her eighteenth year, having experienced religion at that age, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Old School Baptist Church in the State of New York. She was firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and did not give any countenance to the carnal theories and delusions of the present day. She was an ardent lover of the SIGNS, and the firm and uncompromising manner in which it presented and defended the doctrine of God our Savior. She was the daughter of Ephraim Kelley, and the

widow of brother Murry Howard, whose obituary was published in the SIGNS a few years ago. Her funeral was largely attended on the 18th instant at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Howardsville. The writer being requested to conduct the burial services, tried to comfort the mourners, and pointed them away from earth to Jesus, who was anointed by God the Father to comfort the mourners. The text was Matthew xiv. 12.

She died of lung fever, after an illness of nine days, having suffered much, and was resigned to the will of God, whether in life or in death. She left one son, three sisters, and many other relatives, with the church she so dearly loved, to mourn; but we mourn not as those who have no hope, believing that our loss is her gain. Her remains were buried in the cemetery at the rear of the church house, beside her husband. Thus they sleep side by side until the resurrection morn.

E. H. GILLETT.

LENA, Ill.

Nancy G. Fanshier was born in Kentucky in 1813. The family being poor, and the country new, she had but little advantage for education or culture. At the age of fourteen her mother died, leaving her at the head of the family. Her good sense and womanly dignity enabled her to assume the responsibility and perform the arduous duties with credit to herself and honor to the family. She was married at the age of twenty-one to George Fanshier, a poor but honest man, and emigrated to southern Illinois, battling against the hardships of a new country for four years. There her first child was born, in 1832. Thence they moved to central Illinois, securing a humble home, living there thirty-two years. There were thirteen children, eight of whom are living. One died while an infant, and one was killed in a cyclone. Both sleep in the old home church-yard. She joined the Baptist Church in 1840, in which she was a living light. Her noble virtues, christian example and wise counsels shed sunshine and joy on all around her. In 1857 they emigrated to southern Missouri, and secured a good and pleasant home. Here she was a power for good, and lived happily until the war broke out, which brought around them many shadows of sorrow and grief, which became unbearable and unsafe. After losing both home and property, seeking a more congenial clime, they moved to Iowa, passing through Kansas, where she buried a lovely son. They remained in Iowa for sixteen years. Here she buried a married daughter. One son lost his life in defending the flag of his country. A cold climate, the misfortunes of war, and old age, influenced her to move to her children in Greenwood County, Kansas, with whom she lived until her death. Three years ago last January her husband passed over the Jordan of death. She met this misfortune of life as she always did, being fully resigned to the will of God. Though old and feeble, she still shed rays of sunshine and joy in every household and circle in which she moved. After a severe illness of thirty-nine days she fell asleep at the house of J. W. and Mattie J. Smith. Amiable, gentle and pure, in prosperity humble, in adversity hopeful, in honor preferring others, charitable to a fault, a lover of the good, and a friend to the poor. Thus she died, as she had lived, a constant christian. May the great and good Father help us to live as she lived, and may our end be like hers.

Milton Sneed died at the home of his mother and step-father, in Madison Co., Ala., April 2d, 1887, aged twenty-four years, five months and twenty-six days.

I have known Milton ever since his childhood, and I think he was the best boy I ever knew. He was loved by all who knew him. His disease was of the

spine, and was of the most painful nature. Indeed, his sufferings can never be told; but they are all at an end. He left bright evidence of a happy home beyond. May the smiles of heaven rest upon his dear parents, and may they be reconciled to the will of him who knows all and directs all things for the best, is my prayer.

Milton was laid to rest in the family cemetery by the side of his dear sister, whose obituary appeared in the SIGNS some years ago. Yours truly,

R. M. DENNIS.

WAXAHACHIE, Texas.

Vica Darland, daughter of G. H. and Lucinda Darland, died July 6, 1887, aged twelve years, four months and fifteen days. She had a tumor on her neck, which had been growing for about ten months. She was able to go about until about fifteen days before she died. She was patient through all her sufferings. It was hard for us to part with this lovely child, but we hope she is at rest with her blessed Redeemer, where sorrow is never known.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

LUCINDA DARLAND.

PATAHA CITY, Washington Ter.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, December 1, 1887, Mr. George Nowell, aged thirty-three years. He gave evidence that he was a child of God, and was willing to die. He has left to mourn his aged companion, five children, brothers and sisters, with other relatives. I preached at his funeral.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

#### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

D McKean 2, C C Adams 2, G J Tatum, Sr 2, L C Godbey 2, Belle M Parker 2 20, D Ford 2 50, Mrs James Dorman 2 50, Mrs Francis F Kabrick 7, I C Elliott 2 50, Mrs Emma Booth 4, Eld Bazil Jones 2 50, Jas H Stubbs 2 50, John W Hunt 2, S W Richets 50c, Mrs S L Meador 2, Miss S L Landess 5, Stephen Presler 2, Green Carver 2, Hon Wm H Holt 5, John Mann 2, Jas M Yarbrough 2, C E Hart 2 50, J R Powell 2, John D Mathews 10 50, M C Awtrey 2, C C Melton 2 50, F L Cox 2, Wm M Startzman 2 50, B H Free 2, Wilson Kugler 2.—Total \$84 20.

#### MARY PARKER'S LETTERS.

The book of sister Mary Parker's letters will be issued soon. Its size will be five by eight inches. There will be two styles of binding—cloth and paper. The price of the cloth binding will be seventy-five cents, and the paper binding thirty cents. We hope that all who can will buy the cloth binding, and thus render needed assistance to sister Parker. Subscriptions may be sent to Mrs. Frankie McNaghten, Pleasantville, Ohio, or to Martha V. Thomas, Albion, Ind.

#### LIFE'S JOURNEY AND LESSONS BY THE WAY.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1888.

NO. 2.

## POETRY.

### SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DEAR brethren and sisters of this little band,  
From the east to the west, from all parts  
of our land;  
Let us all join together and write a few  
lines,  
To thank the dear editors for the SIGNS  
OF THE TIMES.  
Thank God that he still in his unchang-  
ing love,  
Has kept them so firm on that rock unre-  
moved;  
That God is directing and leading their  
minds  
To set forth the truth in the SIGNS OF  
THE TIMES.  
O yet may it ever continue the same,  
As to honor our Lord and the truth to  
proclaim;  
As we each one can see it all written in  
lines,  
In our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF  
THE TIMES.  
O may it still be as it has in the past,  
All errors renounce, and the truth to hold  
fast.  
I send my best wishes with these little  
rhymes,  
Hoping long to receive the SIGNS OF THE  
TIMES.

S. J. G.

### CONSOLATION.

ARE you mourning, heavy laden?  
Do you poor in spirit feel?  
'Tis for you the precious Savior  
Came, your bleeding wounds to heal.  
Hear his words of consolation  
In his sermon on the mount;  
He for you is interceding,  
He is your eternal fount.  
Do you hunger and thirst for him?  
Then for you the promise stands;  
Rich and full, and never failing,  
Are the treasures of his hands.  
Wait on him, be of good courage;  
Halt not 'mid despairing gloom;  
In due season will be answered  
Your petitions at the throne.  
In his pity he redeemed you,  
And can all your grief destroy;  
Turn your sorrow into gladness,  
And your weeping into joy.  
He will comfort your disquiet,  
Bid the tempest to be still,  
And in sweet and gentle droppings  
Will his heavenly dew distill.  
Why cast down in somber sadness,  
When his mercy is so nigh?  
Lo, just yonder light is beaming,  
Bright the day spring from on high.  
'Tis the glorious Sun arising;  
Fellow-traveler, cheer up;  
Soon he'll visit you with healing,  
And in love will lift you up.  
You are one of God's loved children,  
For the marks I see you bear;  
You will never be forsaken,  
For your hopes are centered there.  
Firm as the high throne eternal  
Are the wonders of his grace;  
None can perish that have shelter  
In so safe a hiding-place.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### TWO QUESTIONS CONSIDERED.

1. IS THAT man who cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again a sinner?—John iii. 3.

Some dear brethren express the belief that the Savior did not mean the natural man, but that it is the divine life, or the eternal, spiritual child, as they term it, who cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again. Two considerations, to my mind, show that this cannot be so. First. That eternal, spiritual child, or eternal life, as I prefer to call it, needs no birth in this world in order to see the kingdom of God; for being eternally in Christ, it had eternally all his knowledge. Second. The word "again," which in this place means "from above," clearly implies a previous birth. The man who must be born again, or from above, before he can see the kingdom of God, must certainly have been born once before. The Savior clearly designates him as the natural man by using the word "ye," saying to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." The Scriptures throughout confirm this view by designating the natural man, and not the eternal, spiritual child, as the one who cannot see, receive or know the things of the Spirit of God.—1 Cor. ii. 11-14. This man has been born once of the flesh; and the life thus derived from the earthly Adam has powers that can deal with the things of this world, but cannot reach beyond. When he is born again, or from above, he has another life, derived from the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by which he has the capacity to discern spiritual things.

The child of God, then, as he is manifested in this world, is one who has been the subject of two births, and is therefore a partaker of flesh and blood (Heb. ii. 14), and also a partaker of the divine nature.—2 Peter i. 4. The products of these two births in the Christian are distinct from each other, each nature remaining like its progenitor. This the Savior distinctly declares in the expression, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The use of the word "that" in this sentence, rather than the personal pronoun "he," shows that the two natures now existing in him who has been born again are referred to, and not two separate children. These two natures are contrary the one to the other, so that the child of God, as

manifested in this world, cannot do the things that he would.—Gal. v. 17.

The birth from above has not at all changed the Adamic nature which was manifested by the first birth, but that remains the same as before; for a birth never changes the nature of anything, but it greatly changes the condition. The change experienced by the sinner who has been born again I have compared to the change wrought by the entrance of light into a loathsome dungeon. The change is in revealing the dangerous and obnoxious things, not in removing them, nor in making them pure and lovely. The first effect of that light would be to inspire terror and loathing in the mind of one who was imprisoned there; and this is the first effect of that "life which was the light of men," which manifests the hidden evils of the heart. The poor sinner in whom this life is manifested, the conscious sinner, the sinner who has been born again, is filled with terror, self-loathing and sorrow by what he sees within his own heart. This wretchedness continues as long as his attention is fixed upon himself, upon the filthy dungeon where he dwells, and the odious and dangerous things abounding there. But when the beautiful light itself attracts and fixes his attention, and his mind is drawn away from his wretched condition in the contemplation of that glory and purity, which cannot be tarnished or polluted by the vile atmosphere into which it has come, nor by any of the vile things upon which it rests, he is filled with admiration and delight. And when his enraptured gaze follows that golden path of light to its glorious source, and he beholds the blessed Sun of righteousness, and every cheering ray of sunshine becomes to him a precious promise that he shall one day be delivered from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, he forgets his present distress, and his heart sings for joy.

No change of nature takes place in the Adamic man, in "that which is born of the flesh," until the resurrection.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God."—1 John iii. 2. True, it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but as we are now, having been born again, possessing two antagonistic natures, having no good thing in our flesh, liable to transgress, liable to live after the flesh and die, even now are we the sons of God. Our sonship

is not in the flesh, but it is the poor sinner who has the sonship, in having the Spirit of Christ within him. It is the sinner in whom, by the new birth, the life and sonship of God is manifested. Was not he a child of God who said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief?" Was not he a child of God who said, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin?" Yes, it is the sinner who has been born again, the vessel of mercy which God hath afore prepared unto glory, the one who was foreknown, and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. It is not with the flesh that he sees the sin that is in his flesh and mourns on account of it, but with the spirit. It is not with the flesh that he cries Abba, Father; but it is by the Spirit of Christ which has been sent forth into his heart because he is a son.—Romans viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6.

In our earthly nature we sin; and "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It is the children of God of whom the apostle speaks; but in that nature which is born of God we do not sin. By that faith which is born of God we overcome the world, and always please him; without that faith it is impossible to please him. If the Spirit of Christ dwell in us we are not in the flesh, but in the spirit.—Romans viii. 9. Whosoever abideth in Christ sinneth not.—1 John iii. 6. When we experimentally abide in him, walking in the Spirit, we realize this immunity from sin; for there is no sin nor sinful disposition in that Spirit which is in us by the spiritual birth, and whose sweet control we then experience.

The Savior did not say, *He* who is born again is spirit; neither did the apostle say, *He* who is born again sinneth not. The word "again" is only used when reference is had to the sinner who must be, or has been, the subject of a second birth, and is not used when the spirit manifested in that birth is distinctly referred to. The apostle, after speaking of a brother (a child of God) who may sin, immediately says, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not;" clearly designating that new man, that divine nature which is in him who has been born again. There are times when we so realize the power of that faith which is born of

God, and which overcometh the world, that we are not troubled by sin; but how seldom are we so favored. How much of our time we so feel the burden of our earthly nature with its manifold sins and corruptions that we can only cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," and feel a constant need of our "advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

The dear Savior said by the psalmist, "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God."—Psa. lxxxiv. 2. His flesh was the same as that of which the children are partakers.—Heb. ii. 14. Here I will remark that the word "flesh" in this respect includes all that was born of the flesh, the mind and the affections as well as the physical body. In his flesh he could bear all the infirmities of his people, feel all their pains, and be tempted in all points like unto them. Yet his flesh was sinless in the sense that he did no sin. "He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh." His pure and holy Spirit so controlled that flesh, or human nature, which he took upon him, that not one sinful thought or unholy emotion or impure desire ever arose within him. He "was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." It was that holy Spirit that caused his heart and his flesh to cry out for the living God, and by the same Spirit he knew that his flesh should rest in hope. So the heart and flesh of his people through that same Spirit cry out for the living God. For they "are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones;" and his experiences in their salvation shall be theirs in measure. There are times when they feel the controlling power of his Spirit within them to that extent that this language of the psalmist sweetly expresses their experience. Their heart is filled with an ardent desire for the courts of the Lord, in which it seems as though even the natural powers partake. Their very footsteps hasten to the place where the saints meet for the worship of the living God, their tongues join in the songs of praise to his blessed name, their faces glow with the emotions of heavenly love and holy desire that swell their hearts, and their eyes overflow with tears of tender contrition, thanksgiving and joy. They well know that in their flesh there dwells no good thing, and that flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Why, then, this sweet and heavenly animation, that reaches at times even to their fleshly powers, causing them to move forward so joyously in these spiritual exercises. This often becomes a trial to the dear child of God through the temptation of the devil, causing him to fear that all his exercises and emotions are only natural, and that he does not even know what true spiritual animation and zeal are. Nevertheless these feelings are from the spirit, and not from the flesh, although thus expressed through the flesh. It is because the Spirit of him

who raised up Jesus from the dead, which dwells in the saints, quickens or moves their mortal bodies, that they can do those things that are acceptable to God, and can feel these sweet emotions through the flesh. For the body of one in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells is dead because of sin; and no thought, emotion or act can be acceptable unless that mortal body is quickened or moved to do that act or think that thought by the Spirit of Christ.—Rom. x. 11. The natural man may do the same things—go to meeting, be baptized, sing hymns of praise, preach words of truth; but all his works are dead works, because it was not the Spirit of Christ that quickened his mortal body in doing them.

It is the Spirit of Christ in us from which every true spiritual emotion and action flows; but that Spirit has a power that can break through, break down, overcome and bring into subjection every fleshly power, and "every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Cor. x. 3-5. It is that which makes the mortifying of the deeds of the body to be for our spiritual benefit. A natural man may mortify the deeds of the body, but it is not "through the Spirit," and is only a dead work. It is this quickening power of the Spirit of Christ which dwells in him that the dear saint experiences when the powers of his natural mind are engaged in heavenly themes, when his heart beats with joy, his face glows, and his tongue sings hosannas at the felt presence of Jesus; and when he is cold and dark, and even when walking after the flesh, the power of that Spirit is still felt in preventing him from finding comfort in that walk in darkness, and in making the poor, desolate soul mourn, and long, and cry out for the living God. In the dark, perhaps more sensibly than in the light, we can say in another expression of the psalmist, "My flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is."—Psalm lxxiii. 1. These mysterious experiences, in which the heart and flesh appear to be so wonderfully embraced and engaged, are a sweet assurance that when "our heart and our flesh fail us," we shall more fully and gloriously than ever before realize the power of the living God as "the strength of our heart and our portion forever," when he shall come to "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

2. Do the Scriptures teach that the elect are sinners of Adam's fallen race?

Let us consider some of the places where this word is used. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."—Isa. xlii. 1. This refers to our Savior as he was to appear in the flesh of his people for their redemption. All that is spoken of him here was fulfilled when he took upon

him the form of a servant, and in fashion as a man became obedient even unto death.—Philippians ii. 7, 8. When he read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," he said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."—Luke iv. 18-21. The word "elect" always regards him as one with his people in the flesh to redeem them from sin. As the elect, the inheritor of the Lord's mountains, he was to come out of Jacob and out of Judah.—Isa. lxxv. 9.

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."—2 Thess. ii. 13. They who were chosen unto salvation must have been regarded, in that choice from the beginning, as sinners. The grace that was given the saints in Christ before the world began assuredly designates them as sinners; for by grace they are saved, and their salvation and calling of God are according to his eternal purpose and grace. In reading the first chapter of Ephesians we find that all spiritual blessings, which include grace, mercy, repentance, forgiveness of sins, are ours in Christ according as God hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; and that the purpose of God in both choice and blessings was that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. The choice, then, must certainly have been with a foreview of them as sinners. This view is absolutely confirmed by the following expression concerning the same characters: "Who hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. i. 1-7. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2. The foreknowledge of God, according to which they are elect, must regard them as involved in the fall, as sinners. Of the same characters Paul also says, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," and that they were called and justified.—Rom. viii. 29, 30. This could only be said of sinners. Further considering the language of Peter, we see that sanctification of the Spirit, through which the election is manifested, and obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, which are declared to have been the object of the election, can only have reference to sinners. What is it but sin painfully felt within them that makes the elect cry unto God day and night? And of what enemy will he avenge them but sin?—Luke xviii. 7.

The reason that none can lay anything to the charge of God's elect is not because they were never involved in sin, but because Christ died for them, and God has justified them.—Rom. viii. 33. "Put on therefore, as

the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies," &c.—Col. iii. 12. This indicates that the apostle regarded the elect as those who need admonition and exhortation. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."—2 Tim. ii. 10. Sinners only can obtain salvation. From among idolatrous Israel God chose and reserved unto himself seven thousand. "Even so now at this time there is a remnant according to the election of grace." A remnant, "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world," but "chosen out of the world." "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 5, 7; John xv. 19. In the light of the above Scriptures, with many others, how can we think that the elect are not sinners of Adam's fallen race?

I believe in the doctrine of the eternal, vital union, or unity, of Christ and the church; that she was ever one with him by virtue of that eternal life which was hers in him before the world began. I believe that she was loved by the Father as he loved the Son, and he loved him before the foundation of the world.—John xvii. 23, 24. That everlasting love has followed her and remained with her through all the depths of the fall in the earthly Adam, "even when dead in sins;" and because of that love he has drawn her.—Jere. xxxi. 3; Eph. ii. 5. I believe that the word "elect" only applies to the people of God according to the foreknowledge of God, as involved in sin, and that "the purpose of God according to election" is fulfilled in the saving and calling of sinners according to that purpose. At the same time, I understand the love of God to have been given to the church in her un-fallen state, and not removed from her when she fell. This is one of the glorious features of the love of Christ to his church to which the apostle calls especial attention in his exhortation to husbands. He followed her in the transgression, as Adam, "who is the figure of him that was to come," followed his wife, because they were one before the fall, and he loved her then. He followed her with power, which Adam did not have, to redeem her unto himself, that she should be holy and without blemish.—Eph. v. 25-33; 1 Cor. xv. 45; Rom. v. 14. She was his wife before she went astray, or he could not have redeemed her. "He hateth putting away."—Mal. ii. 16. The same truth is presented in Isaiah liii. 6: "All we like sheep have gone astray;" "and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." They were his sheep before they went astray, and therefore he as the owner and shepherd can redeem them.—1 Peter ii. 5.

Upon this deeply mysterious subject I will present the language of Mr. Philpot, for many years editor of the *Gospel Standard*, as expressing what I believe to be the truth. He says: "All the saints and servants

of God do not see with me on this point; but my own view and belief is that the church was espoused to Christ not as a fallen, but as an un-fallen bride." "I think we may gather this from two significant types. The first is the giving of Eve to Adam in paradise, which all will admit was a typical representation of the giving of the church to Christ, and of his union with her, for the apostle most evidently alludes to it as such: 'For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.'—Eph. v. 30. The marriage took place in paradise before the fall, not after. Eve was taken out of her husband's body, presented to him in an un-fallen state, as such received, as such wedded. But observe, secondly, the high priest, who under the law was an eminent type of Christ, was not allowed to marry a harlot or a divorced woman. He was to marry a bride in her virgin purity. Now I gather from these two striking types that our gracious Lord took the church un-fallen, not without a foreview of the fall, or of what he would suffer for her, and of her one day being washed in his blood and clothed in his righteousness. But primarily he accepted her un-fallen."—*Gospel Pulpit*, No. 65, p. 18; No. 91, p. 8.

While the Scriptures thus teach that the Lord's people belonged to him before the world began in un-fallen purity, a truth no more mysterious and unsearchable than any other part of the "mystery of godliness," and while the saints are at times made to feel in the spirit, most unaccountably to themselves, a deep consciousness of the Lord having been their dwelling place before the mountains were brought forth, and a sense of longing in the spirit as for a purity and holiness which they seem to have known before, a spiritual home-sickness, as it were, for that eternal and glorious home which their spirit knows so well, and toward which it always looks, "always beholding the face of our Father which is in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 10), thus longing to return to where, in that spirit, they were before, according to the command, "Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee" (Isaiah xlv. 22); at the same time, wherever they are referred to as the elect, something in the connection of the subject shows that they are those who can join in the song of the redeemed, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov., 1887.

DUTTON, Ark., Dec. 24, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—About two years ago, at the house of a sister, I picked up a copy of the *Gospel Messenger*, and found in it an advertisement of a pamphlet entitled, "A refutation of the doctrine of God's absolute predestination of all

things that come to pass in the world." Had it really come to this? An advertisement in a Baptist paper of a pamphlet in "refutation" of Primitive Baptist doctrine! And the thought occurred, Are there none valiant for truth? Soon after, an able article from Elder Durand appeared in the *Messenger*, with a reply by Elder Rowe. I sent for the pamphlet alluded to, as I had been impressed to write upon the subject, and began writing a reply. I wrote nearly forty pages of manuscript; but concluding that it was doubtful whether I should be able to publish it, I have not yet finished it. I wrote to brother Durand, and he rather advised me to condense and publish it in the SIGNS. But fearing I might crowd out better matter, or increase controversy, I have thus far deferred. To write upon the subject as I would wish, would necessitate a reference to some called brethren in a way that it seems that brethren should not be spoken of.

The principal argument used in the pamphlet referred to, though presented in different shapes and numbers of times, is that the doctrine of predestination of all things makes God "the author of sin." This looks to me much like a weapon that is always found in the camp of the enemy, and always used in fighting against the truth. So long as brethren honestly differ, and reason with one another as brethren, in a brotherly manner, our fellowship for them is never affected. But when those esteemed as brethren require of us as a condition of fellowship that we remove, or suffer them to remove, one of the ancient landmarks, even though it be a brother in the flesh, it is time to rise up and gird on the armor, and stand upon the mount, and cry, "Cursed is he that removeth the landmark." If we quietly suffer the removal of one of the "ancient landmarks which our fathers have set," they will take away another, and another, until all are gone. Our love for one another as brethren has many tests and sore trials; so has our faith. Paul says of Satan, "We are not ignorant of his devices." "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed," &c. "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him."—Deut. xiii. 6-8. "The Lord has commanded concerning Jacob; that his adversaries should be round about him."—Lam. i. 17. "Of your

own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts xx. 30. It is evident from the whole tenor of the Scriptures that these things are thus ordained of God, that he may prove his people, whether they will walk in the law of the Lord or no.

It seems to be one of the most successful devices of Satan to bring in heresy, or opposition to the truth, and then if any contend for the faith to accuse them of "disturbing fellowship," of "causing controversy," &c. It is important that we cultivate fellowship among the brotherhood; but crying, Peace, peace, where there is no peace, does not make it. It is also important that we "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints." If this causes men to rave and rail against the truth, and cry out, "Away with such doctrine; cast it to the moles and to the bats" (J. Rowe's Ref. Pred., page 21), we are in no sense responsible for the disturbance of fellowship. Since the *Messenger* virtually charges you, brethren Beebe, with disorder in disfellowshipping J. Rowe, I wish to present a few extracts from Elder Rowe's writings, for the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS. But let us examine the *Messenger's* position a little more fully. After making an extract from Hassell's History, pages 651, 652, in the December number of the *Messenger*, taken from Dr. Gill, in which he says in substance that God wills sin, though in a different way than he wills that which is good; and in reference to the fall of Adam, "God decreed it, but that the sin of eating was not owing to God, for he forbade it," &c; Elder Respass remarks, "We think these views substantially the same as the London Confession. Now we cannot see why any Primitive Baptist should disfellowship his brother holding these views. But one brother [Elder Rowe] who holds this view, has been publicly charged with railing against the truth, for expressing it [in the article published in the SIGNS, Dec. 15, page 281], and has been disfellowshipped therefore by a brother upon his own personal authority, and without gospel labor."

This goes before the world representing the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES as disfellowshipping a brother for holding the same doctrine as Dr. Gill, who, Elder Hassell says, was the "ablest Baptist theologian since the days of the apostles," and for holding the same doctrine as the London Confession of Faith, upon which the oldest churches and associations in this country were founded! If the reader will bear with us, when we have considered the doctrine advocated by Gill and the London Confession, and Elder Rowe's "agreement" therewith, as briefly as possible, we will proceed to give the extracts alluded to above. Gill also says, in relation to the fall of Adam, that "God foreknew it," and that "God's foreknowledge of things future

flows from the determinations of his will. Wherefore God predetermined the fall of Adam. This fell under his decree, as all things do that come to pass in this world." This is the view of Dr. Gill. But Elder Rowe says that such is "teaching that hellish wickedness has originated in God's holy decree."—Ref. Pred., page 5.

Dr. Gill says that all things that come to pass in the world fall under God's decree. But Elder Rowe says, "In answer to prayer, God has shown me that he has not appointed, in a sense of decree, any of the wickedness of the world."—Ref. Pred., pages 3, 4.

Dr. Gill says "that God predetermined [decreed] the fall of Adam." But Elder Rowe says, "The only way to fairly and scripturally reach a conclusion as to whether God has appointed the wickedness of the world, is to consider whether he appointed that first transgression of Adam. If it should ever be shown that Adam's transgression was a fruit of God's appointment, then I will consent that their theory is sustained, and that God is the author of all subsequent sin."—Ref. Pred., page 8.

Thus it is plain to anybody that Rowe and Gill are no more alike than light and darkness, truth and falsehood.

The London Confession declares, "God hath decreed in himself from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever come to pass."—Hassell's History, page 670. Elder Rowe declares in substance that if this is true God is the "author of sin" (page 5), "author of wickedness" (page 5), "author of hellish wickedness" (page 5).

The London Confession also declares that "the determinate counsel of God extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions, both of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission."—Hassell's History, page 642.

There is no reason to believe that any one in this country, at the present time, is more predestinarian than the London Confession. Elder Hassell says it "adopted the strong language of the Westminster upon this subject" (predestination).—Hassell's History, page 335. Hence Elder Rowe's views are like neither Gill nor the London Confession. We hope brother Respass will hasten to correct his statement.

Now for the extracts; and we hope all impartial readers will consider how little the sentiment of these extracts accords with the doctrine of Dr. Gill and the London Confession, and also the railing spirit in which they are written.

"I cannot believe that God's holy decree is the original source of all evil, as some affirm."—Ref. Pred., page 4. "Things predestinated are fruits of that predestination."—Page 4. "They—but few of them—will declare in terms that God is the author of sin; which shows that they

may reverence him, notwithstanding they hold *grievous* errors," (italics mine).—Page 5. Does Elder Rowe fellowship those who hold grievous errors? "Should I express a high appreciation of a crab-tree, I don't think I should be heard declaiming against the fruit it bore."—Page 5. As if we held that sin proceeded from God as fruit does from a tree. "The revelation of God's word contradicts such a theory, *as may be seen if they would*."—Page 5. As if we willfully held those grievous errors. "Holding such views, how is it possible to escape the charge of teaching that God is the author of sin?"—Page 5. "We shall never be able to do this [stop the mouths of gainsayers] by teaching that *hellish* wickedness has originated in God's holy decree."—Page 5. "It is no pleasure to me to *withstand* such absurdities."—Page 5. Does Elder Rowe expect to gain the fellowship of Primitive Baptists by withstanding their doctrine and calling it absurdities? "Blending the question of sovereignty with the question of predestination, as though God's overruling the wickedness of men necessarily implied that he appointed such wickedness, that he might have opportunity to overrule it."—Page 6. "Then none of the race of Adam had ever borne the image of the Devil, had not God appointed that they should. Our bearing the image of Christ is of God's predestination; and if our bearing the image of the Devil is of the same thing, then why should God approve the one and condemn the other?"—Page 7. "Then why can they not see the end of *their theory*, and abandon it?"—Page 7. "It is not more impossible for God to lie, than it is impossible for him to appoint the wickedness he forbids, *for that would be a practical lie*."—Page 7. This is undoubtedly a fearful declaration. God commanded Pharaoh, "Thus saith the God of the Hebrews, Let my people go."—Exodus ix. 1. Yet he said to Moses, "But I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go."—Exodus iv. 21. Here he appoints the retention of his people, and hardens Pharaoh's heart to that end, after having commanded Pharaoh to let them go, and notified him that if he refused he would smite his borders with plagues, and destroy his first-born.—Exodus viii. 1. This is recorded in the Bible, and is precisely just such as Elder Rowe says would be a practical lie. "Who art thou that repliest against God?" "If he has certainly predestinated the wickedness of the world, should not such wickedness as certainly be regarded as the fruit of predestination?"—Pages 7, 8. "Holding that the wickedness of men is of God's appointment, again I ask, How is it possible to escape the conclusion that God is the author of sin?"—Page 8. "If it should ever be shown that Adam's transgression was a fruit of God's appointment, then I will consent that their theory is sustained, and that God is the author of all

subsequent sin."—Page 8. "These, I say, furnish no support for their theory."—Page 9. "Let men refrain from declaring that the pure and spotless God has unalterably decreed all the wickedness of men and devils, which is offensive to him, and perplexing to all good men, with no testimony to ground their opinions upon, except their misconception of those texts wherein the sovereignty of God is declared."—Page 9. "But this they can easily answer by pronouncing it carnal reasoning, which they do, simply from the fact that they can bring no better answer."—Page 10. "If he had previously and imperatively decreed that man should transgress, can't we see what follows, viz., that God laid upon man an obligation to make null his eternal decree, and is supposed to inflict the severest punishment upon him because he did not do it? No, the suffering of the world is not a consequent of Adam failing to make null God's decree, but of his transgressing the law. But when men are wedded to a theory, however absurd it may be, it is easy for them to allege that an argument against their favorite views is carnal reasoning, and make themselves easy with the suggestion that carnal reason cannot reach the secrets of God. Well, in fact, if God's predestination is the source of all evil, that is a secret nowhere revealed in the Scriptures."—Page 10. How much fellowship does he have for, or expect from, those of whom he thus speaks? Or does he suppose that fellowship is promoted between him and his brethren by representing them as holding so obstinately to such ridiculous absurdities, *which he ought to know* that no one ever held, or making themselves easy with such ridiculous suggestions, or that their fellowship is increased by the keen cut of his sarcastic wit? "Nay; no such fears, my brother; for though you argue such things, *your theory is too devoid of truth or power to make God the predestinator of wickedness*."—Page 11. "If an angel were to declare it, I would not believe that God's predestination is the source of all evil."—Page 11. "And here reaffirm, that were an angel to declare it, I would not believe that God's predestination is the source of all evil."—Page 11. "No; were an angel to declare it, I would not believe that God laid upon Adam an obligation to make null his eternal decree."—Page 11. "When they affirm that all the wickedness of the world has emanated from that which is holy, just and good."—Page 11. "His requirements and calls are manifestations of his will; and if he has decreed against his requirements, and calls, then he must be divided; rather than believe which, I think, I would part with the most cherished theory."—Page 12. "No; God has never willed against his will; for then it were uncertain which will would prevail."—Page 12. "With a little scrutinizing, their cherished theory

manifestly narrows down to nothing."—Page 15. "There is no necessity upon us to believe that the wickedness he overrules has emanated from his eternal decree."—Page 15. "But should we believe that the hellish disposition of men to afflict the saints \* \* \* emanated from the same holy decree of a spotless God?"—Page 16. "Notwithstanding such things are boldly asserted, that God's unalterable decree is the source of all the filth of the earth, nevertheless when the artificial polish is taken from their theory there is a loud and lamentable cry of misrepresentation."—Page 16. Horrible doctrine indeed! And advocated by a horrible set! "But should we not as soon expect to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, as to suppose that the filth of the world has originated in God's predestination?"—Page 17. "If the wickedness of the world has emanated from God's decree, as is affirmed, then it originated there."—Page 17. "He [Christ] did not say such things ['A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit'] because his hearers had not sense enough to know that they did not gather grapes of thorns, *but, as it were, to contradict the theory I am opposing and show beyond dispute that God's predestination is not the source of evil*."—Page 17. "No; though it is contrary both to reason and revelation to suppose that light is the source of darkness, *they imagine that they see it is so and conclude it ought not to be questioned*. Is this misrepresentation? Certainly not; for if all the filth of men and devils that have been in the world have emanated from God's unalterable decree, as is affirmed, then who does not see that such teaching is equivalent to affirming that darkness is emanated from light?"—Page 18. The Scriptures affirm that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.—1 John i. 5. Shall we by carnal reason dispute his word, when he himself says, "I create darkness?"—Isaiah xlv. 7. "The Savior says, 'Ye are clean through the word I have spoken unto you.' But that is no mercy, if their former filth had emanated from God's unalterable decree."—Page 19. It was no mercy then to the Israelites, and they did wrong in *praising* God for their deliverance, because he had previously purposed and sworn to Abraham that they should go down into bondage. "Away with such doctrine: cast it to the moles and to the bats."—Page 21.

We have thus run over about half of Elder Rowe's pamphlet of forty pages. We have not presented all the expressions that seem to us objectionable. On page 38 he says, "But what has been the *result* of preaching that God has absolutely predestinated the wickedness of the world? To my knowledge, many years ago a member of the church brutally abused a negro servant; and when brought under discipline, he urged that his conduct was predestinated, and so had to be."

On page 39 he says, "And what does their theory amount to after all, except strife and confusion?"

We have in most instances given the bare quotations (sometimes italicized by us), deeming that alone sufficient; but upon the last quotation we wish to offer some remarks. We have before shown that the London Confession sets forth the doctrine of predestination of all things, as Elder Hassell says, in strong language, declaring that God "hath decreed in himself from all eternity, *freely and unchangeably, all things whatsoever* come to pass, and that his determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions, both of angels and men, *and that not by a bare permission*."

This language is not ambiguous. It absolutely admits of no equivocation. In all the discussion of this subject I have seen nothing stronger on the side of predestination. In fact, I much doubt whether language can be so arranged as to express the doctrine of predestination in stronger terms. It does not come from a mere faction. It is the language of the messengers of the Baptists of England and Wales, representing over one hundred congregations. It is not a recent thing. It was issued in 1689, and was the same in substance as that issued in 1643.—See Hassell, page 663. Thus the Baptists are known to have held this doctrine for nearly two centuries before Elder Rowe was born. Were I to join the Methodists, knowing that they hold, and have held since the days of Wesley, to the doctrine of "infant baptism," my views of propriety would forbid my making extensive war against that doctrine in that denomination, because it is a fundamental part of Methodism, however erroneous I may consider it; and there are denominations that do not hold it. But if I should preach against it, and write against it, and "endeavor in all good conscience to refute it," there would yet be no "strife and confusion" if they were tamely disposed to submit my dictation as I exclaimed, "Away with such doctrine; cast it to the moles and to the bats." But if they were disposed to still contend for their doctrine, as doubtless they would, could I have the effrontery to charge *them* with being the *cause* of the confusion? Could I say, "What does their theory amount to after all, except strife and confusion?" But the doctrine that the wickedness of men is according to God's purpose, has been preached among and by Baptists farther back than the London Confession. Not long after the ascension of our Lord, when the Baptists were sorely punished and persecuted, and when as yet there was none to cause strife and division among them, they with *one accord* (Acts iv. 24) declared, "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel,

were gathered, together FOR TO DO whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts iv. 27, 28. Plain and unequivocal as is this declaration of inspiration, Elder Rowe evades it thus: "If I should determine the death of a dog, by delivering him to a lion, though my decree might be irreversible, yet it had no influence upon the disposition of the lion to destroy the dog."—Ref. Pred., page 26.

But it was not simply the delivering of Christ to them, according to the text, that was determined. IT WAS WHAT THEY WERE GATHERED TOGETHER TO DO. What did they do? Did they bear false witness against him? Did they scourge him? Did they crucify him, contrary both to law and justice, and release a murderer? This they were gathered together to do; this they did; and this is what was determined or decreed; and the Scriptures, and even Elder Rowe, avow that it was wicked. But Elder Rowe says, "I believe that in answer to prayer God has shown me that *he has not appointed*, in a sense of decree, any of the wickedness of the world."—Page 3.

C. W. ANDERSON.

CAIRO, Texas, Aug. 23, 1887.

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND—DEAR AND MUCH BELOVED BROTHER:—You will perhaps be surprised on receiving a letter from me, who am a stranger to you in the flesh; but, my dear brother, I have a hope that we are brethren in Christ Jesus our Lord. Should you feel wearied at reading this poor scribble, please forgive me for intruding on your precious time; for truly your time is much spent in comforting the sheep and lambs of our God. I have just finished reading (the second time) your communication on the words, "And to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant," and I feel constrained to write you a few lines. The subject all the way through has been a great feast to me; but the last piece was so good, so full of fat things, and wine on the lees, well refined. You so well express my own feelings that I must write you.

I have been trying to preach some eight or ten years, and have been blessed with some good and faithful brethren, who have stood shoulder to shoulder with me, and have borne with my many shortcomings; but while this is so, others have proved to be mine enemies, and have labored hard for my overthrow. But the good Lord has helped me, and I yet am upheld by the almighty power of the God of Israel, in whose hand I am, and to whom I desire to be reconciled, knowing that he works all things after the counsel of his own will; being the only self-existent and almighty sovereign ruler and disposer of all things, and that to his own glory and honor.

My dear brother, I wish to tell you, in a brief way, some of the dealings of the Lord with me. I became seriously alarmed at my condition as a

poor sinner when quite young, and tried very hard to live so as to gain the smiles, instead of the frowns, of the sin-avenging God; for it seemed to me that his angry frowns were on me, and that because I was such a great sinner. But I seemed to get no better, but rather grew worse; like the poor woman who spent all she had with physicians, who did her no good. But blessed be God, I have a hope that I found him whom my soul loveth. I hold him, and will not let him go. Like Peter, I can say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Yes, my brother, I got so overburdened with sin and guilt that it seemed I could not live much longer; and I felt that ruin, yes, eternal damnation, was my doom and my just desert. But O how earnestly did I beg for mercy; yet it seemed like there was none for me. I felt that if there ever had been, that time was past, and now I must spend my cries in vain; for it seemed that my prayers fell to the ground. Yet I did not feel to complain at my God, or to say that if he did not save me he was unjust. O no! for I could not see how he could save me and maintain his justice; for the law had spoken in thundertones in my ears, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Thus feeling, one lonely evening, while walking over to see my brother-in-law, I seemed to grow unconscious of all things; and all at once, as if awakened out of sleep, I was standing and gazing at the sun as it was going down. O, my dear brother, tongue cannot tell the joy that thrilled my poor soul. Yes, the poor soul that was a little before in so much trouble, was now filled with joy inexpressible. I wondered what all this meant. The appearance of everything seemed changed, and I felt so light. That burden was gone, and I knew not how nor where; but I felt so different. I soon got into doubt as to what this might be, for I greatly feared that I was deceived; and it was my desire to again pass through the same things, that I might tell more about how things were. I wanted to know that I was not deceived. But that same load of guilt has never come on me which was then and there removed, and which had weighed me down so heavily; and now my heart thrills with joy at the thought that I had come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. Tears fill my eyes while I pen these lines, to think that such a poor, hell-deserving sinner found such peace and such a Friend. I went on for some time, wondering what was the matter with me, and what had taken place. I could not think that I had passed through a change, and so tried for a long time to amuse myself with young and gay company as usual; but there was something I could not solve. I did not love the same amusements that I had loved, yet I partook of them, and tried to love them as before; but alas! I could not. I always, after

going into such amusements, when alone, would feel condemned, and would have to mourn over my conduct, and would promise my God to never do so again. I would go to hear preaching, and the promises to the poor in spirit, to the hungry and thirsty, would be handed out by our beloved brother, W. M. Perkins, who then preached in our midst. O how my cup would run over, and I could hardly keep from crying aloud for joy. When the door of the church would be opened I could hardly keep away, for it seemed as if there was a mighty cord drawing me, which it seemed would pull me to them in spite of all I could do; but I would hold myself down on the seat, and pull against that cord with all my might, feeling that I was too unworthy, and not fit. Yet my feelings were, O that I was fit for entrance into that glorious church, and a fit subject to be among those lovely people. My decision was, I am not fit, and must not put myself on them to be in their way. Finally I went; but I hardly knew it until I was there. I told a little of my feelings, but O how little, in broken accents. They received me, and I was baptized by Elder W. M. Perkins, who was the pastor and beloved brother at that time. He is yet living, and is truly a father in Israel. Soon the impression came on me to preach; but my answer would be, O no, not me. I am too unlearned, and too great a sinner, to think of such a thing. But in spite of all the word would ring in my ears, You will have to preach. Thus I went on for a long time, with a continual struggle, and with many tears and restless days and nights, until at last I made an effort, the brethren urging me all the time, and having told me they thought I had a public work to do. At length they liberated me, and gave me a written license. I would be up and down in my feelings, sometimes having a little liberty in trying to preach, and then again having none, but felt to be in midnight darkness, and could not come forth. The feelings of horror at such times none but my God can know. After trying for some time, and feeling that I was not preaching so as to comfort the brethren, nor to the building up of the cause, I resolved in my mind not to try any more, without more evidence of my call; but, my dear brother, I was the most miserable man, it seemed to me, on earth. I had undertaken a work that I was not able to perform, and that God had not called me to do. I thought I had brought disgrace on the church instead of a blessing; and O how could I stand it, to think that the cause I loved better than my own soul was injured by me. But I trust that I again came to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; for one night, while in such agony, and filled with tossings to and fro upon my bed, in prayer to almighty God to show me my duty, I fell asleep and dreamed. I felt that he heard my cry and sent me confirmation of my

call to preach; and that if I did it I would have some peace and enjoyment in his kingdom. I felt to take courage at the glorious vision presented to me in my dream; and with Job I can say, "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—Job xxxiii. 15, 16. So, my dear brother, I have been traveling and trying to preach Jesus much of my time since, serving from three to four churches ever since, besides some outside appointments; and then I cannot comply with all the calls to go and preach. I have a wife and nine children (most of whom are small) to care for. I go through heat and cold, wet and dry, without the promise of one cent for my labors; but I have never as yet suffered for food or raiment. Some of my brethren have kindly helped me bear the burthen, but I am made often to wonder how I do hold out so well; but then my wonder ends when I think of him who has bid us consider the lilies and the sparrow. O, my brother, he careth for his ministers, and holds them in his right hand; and I feel to say unto him, Hold thou me up, and I shall stand.

My dear brother, I must close, yet it is not all told, neither do I believe I ever shall be able to tell all; but I live in the hope of a glorious resurrection. In love to you, I close, asking an interest in your prayers.

You are at liberty to send this to the SIGNS if you wish.

DURHAM RICHARDSON.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, Dec. 10, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The time of year has rolled around that reminds me it is time to send you my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1888; so please find inclosed a postal-order for two dollars. The words of the psalmist came into my mind just now, "I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop." "For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping." "My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass."—Psalm cii. 7-11. These words are very appropriate to my case. For many years my wife and I have been living together, and for the last several years, for the most part, alone; but by reason of age her eyes were dim, so that she could not see to read; but through the kindness of a covenant-keeping God my eyes were strong, and it was her great delight to have me read for her, and no less my delight to read to her. Then we could read and reciprocate the excellent things contained in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and communicate with each other concerning those precious things which were uppermost in our affections, and thus we could pass the hours joyfully away. But now she has (I trust) gone to a full realization of those things concerning which it was her exceeding

great delight to talk of here below, and I "am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop." I read the SIGNS, but it is like partaking of a luscious repast all alone, having no one to communicate with. Although full of marrow and fatness, to me it is a dry morsel, that I cannot enjoy as I once did. "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my hand was stretched out in the night, and slackened not: my soul refused to be comforted. I remember God, and am disquieted: I complain, and my spirit is overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes watching: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone forever? Doth his promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?"—Psa. lxxvii. 2-9. The foregoing quotation is made from the "New Revision of the Bible." This I did because it is much preferable to the old, in my humble opinion, and it is more in harmony with the marginal rendering in the authorized version of the Bible.

I have been traveling and trying to preach among different churches. This for the time being takes my mind measurably from my troubles; but on returning where a few months ago I enjoyed the sociable society of a dear, loving companion in the troubles pertaining to this world, but more abundantly a companion to comfort me in my often despondent moments, and cheer me when gloomy doubts and fears take hold of my mind, I am ready to sink in despair. Now when I return home, and no dear wife, as formerly, to meet and greet me with a smile, I feel worse than I did before I went away. Another thing is very grievous to me. When I am around visiting different churches I cannot enjoy the society of the brethren and sisters. They will be conversing together of the things pertaining to the Lord Jesus and his salvation, and appear to enjoy their conversation so much. I will be sitting by, mute, neither understanding a word that is spoken, nor the subject of their conversation. I often sit under the sound of the gospel (as I suppose), and have no knowledge of the subject on which the speaker is preaching. To me it is like the chattering of a Chinaman. I can hear the noise, but cannot know that any words are spoken. I call to mind the words of good old Job, as being applicable to my case: "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness."—Job xxix. 2, 3. Again, "O that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would

know the words which he would answer me; and understand what he would say unto me. Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered forever from my judge. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: but he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."—Job xxiii. 2-10. But I awfully fear that my gold is all dross, that will eventually be burned up; for it seems to me that the more I am tried the worse I get; and the older I grow the more I see of my sinful nature, and abhor myself and all my good works, as being evil, and only evil, continually. God only knows what I am; for I am sure that I do not. One thing I do know, that all my trust is in what Christ has done and suffered for poor, helpless sinners like me. Outside of that I have no hope; but with Watts I can say,

"My soul looks back to see  
The burdens thou didst bear  
When hanging on the cursed tree,  
And hopes her guilt was there.

"Believing, we rejoice  
To see the curse remove;  
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice,  
And sing his bleeding love."

O! if my guilt was not laid upon the head of the heavenly Scape-goat, the Lamb of God, and carried away into a land not inhabited, when hanging on the cursed tree, I am lost, ruined and undone forevermore. But I hope my guilt was there; for the promise stands sure, thus, "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."—Isa. xlv. 21-23.

From your aged but unworthy brother in the Lord,

JOHN STIPP.

HANNIBAL, Mo., Dec. 25, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—This day completes the seventy-fifth year of my mortal pilgrimage; and although more feeble, I am still blessed of the Lord with a good degree of health and strength, and am once more permitted the privilege of sending for the SIGNS for myself and the others at this place, and of sending the money in advance, as I have always been able to do. I also have the pleasure of adding the name of one new subscriber, making two new ones this year. Would that I could add many more, for the SIGNS is

worthy the support of all lovers of the truth. It is not perfect, neither does it pretend to be; but with all its imperfections I hesitate not to say that from its beginning down to this day there has not been its equal. I speak not in disparagement of others, for there are some good ones, and I am a subscriber to several. I have been receiving the SIGNS, I believe, since the year 1838, continuously, and want to continue the remainder of my days. It is a remarkable fact, that in all this long period I have been a subscriber I do not think I have failed of receiving more than one or two numbers. This speaks well for the faithfulness of its publication, and also for the mails; and down to this day it adheres faithfully to its original position in every particular. It is true there have been some disputations upon subjects "hard to be understood," and things written causing sorrow among brethren, and even divisions; still I love the SIGNS, and desire to bear my feeble testimony to its excellence, and to the doctrine and order contended for in its columns. I do not indorse all I see in it, nor can we suppose that all can see and understand alike. All have not the same gift. One is after this manner, and another after that manner; but each is useful, and all are by the one self-same Spirit, "who divideth to every man severally as he will." The Lord has set the gifts in the order in the body "as it hath pleased him," and did not intend the eye to hear, nor the ear to see, neither the hands to walk. The apostle, in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians, tells us how it is, and that they were thus set "that there should be no schism in the body." Now all the gifts of which the apostle speaks in this chapter are figurative, and are for the edification of the saints, of the church, the body of Christ, and every one of them is "necessary," as the apostle says; and keeping in mind the figure of the eye, that it is for seeing, perceiving, &c., which the ear, or hand, or other member or gift, cannot do, it is evident that there are perceptions of truth by that member which will not be found in the ear, which is for "trying words." Evidently there are many "deep things" of the kingdom of our God which it has not been his pleasure to reveal to all his children, but he has bestowed them in gifts upon his church; and if all had the same understanding, where would be the need of the different gifts for the edification of the body? There could be none. The eye is a member of the body, and without it the body would be in darkness. Our Lord says, "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." This is the importance of the eye. Now, if this member comes to us bringing some truth of the mystery of God which we cannot all perceive, shall we say it is not true because it has not been made manifest to us? Can all see? are all an eye? can all

hear—try words? O no. If all could, there would be no need for instructors. The gifts in the church cannot impart the knowledge of God our Savior, nor of his truth; but as Paul was sent to the Gentiles to "open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light" (Acts xxvi. 18), so do the gifts in the church, or to those to whom the truth has been made known in their experience by the blessed Spirit of truth, "whom the world cannot receive." When the truth comes to such they not only believe it, but they know it is the truth; and they have no knowledge that it is truth unless it comes so indorsed in their experience. This is so in regard to all truth, "yea, the deep things of God;" for "the Spirit searcheth all things."

Upon the many deep subjects recorded in the Scriptures of truth the brethren write according to the light they have; and others ought not to complain because they too are not an "eye," for the Lord has set them "as it hath pleased him." For my own part, I feel that I know but in part, and a very small part indeed; but I desire to adore the riches of that grace that has enabled me to know that I am a sinner, and that through its reigning power to hope that I shall at last triumph over sin and death, and to enter into eternal joys, together with all the redeemed of the Lord, being predestinated thereto "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

These few rambling thoughts I send along with the remittance, to be disposed of as you deem proper. May the Lord pardon all amiss, and bless the remainder, if any, to our comfort; and to his holy and reverend name be all praise forever.

W. F. KERCHEVAL.

#### A DREAM.

FRIDAY night, November 18th, 1887, I dreamed that I was preparing to go to meeting, and it seemed very difficult to get ready to start to meet the happy saints. Many obstacles were in my way. Eventually I caught my horse and mounted it, started, and went on some distance. All at once I was on the edge of a high precipice, which seemed to be hundreds of feet high, in which was a river of muddy water. I knew I could not pass over it. I looked to see if I could turn back, but the path was too narrow to turn in; hence I could not turn back, and to go forward was certain death. I looked off to one side of the path to see if I could go through the thicket, when I beheld a dark thicket, all matted with vines, which could not be passed through. On the other side of the thicket was an awful gulf, deep and wide. I cried out in great grief, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst open the way so I can pass." Immediately the brush and vines were removed, and I went on to the awful gulf, thinking, How can I cross over? When I came to the gulf the Lord

ad made a bridge over it, and I could cross over with no fear. The first thing I knew I was taken across the first dark gulf. (Remember, everything around me here was darkness.) I did not know how I crossed over, but when I was placed on the other side my horse was gone, and I had nothing but this sinful body of mine. I did not know how I got rid of my horse, nor how I got over the two gulfs and through the great thicket; yet I knew that I was over. There was a space of time that I was unconscious, and did not know where I was; but when I came to myself again I was in a most beautiful valley (humility), in the "narrow way." On one side was the gulf, and on my right and left were two exceedingly high mountains (of opposition). The path I had to travel was between these two mountains all the way, and the gulfs in the rear. I went on in the path, but was so very feeble that I could scarcely travel. I hungered and thirsted in the way, and often found many obstacles which were very difficult to pass over. On my way I saw beautiful houses on either side of the path. They were well painted on the outside, and persons lived in them whom I had seen on the other side of the gulf, and they welcomed me in to rest with them, as I was fatigued. All of them seemed anxious for me to stop with them, but I could not, for there was no rest for me there in any of their houses. Notwithstanding they were pretty on the outside, they were ugly on the inside. The inhabitants were very friendly to me, but it was only for my destruction.—See Prov. vii. I knew they were ignorant of Jesus, and hence I could not go there, notwithstanding I was much fatigued, being feeble, and the weather was dry. I wanted to find a people who were the Lord's, and taught in the school of Christ. I began to inquire for the distance, and it seemed a long way from me. I became so greatly fatigued that I thought I should faint in the way; but I soon came to a house, and entered, it being in the way. There was no artificial work about this house, no outside paintings; but it was made of sound material, nicely prepared and fitly framed, and all of durable substance. I found acquaintances here, with whom I enjoyed myself, and remained a short time; but I soon saw that this was not my home, and I must go on further. I started again, and saw a very small place that I was compelled to go through, and I knew I could not, for it was too small—that if I started in I could never pass out; but to my surprise the Savior lifted me up and placed me on the top of the wall, where I had a view of the endless enjoyment for the saints, and now I was passing into the eternal felicity of saints. But O what a struggle to get there! I awoke, using these words, "What a rugged road the christian has to pass through!"

People make a great deal of sport

of dreams, and call the Old Baptists "old dreamers." Joseph's brethren, when they hated him, called him a dreamer; but when they had to go to him to buy corn they did not speak so to him.

I feel that this is a synopsis of my experience. I hope that the horse I started on, which was human ability, has been taken away; and I hope I have crossed the Red Sea and found a sweet deliverance, and have been placed in the narrow way. The mountains and the gulf seem to represent the world, the flesh, and the devil, which oppose the children of God while here on earth. The painted houses on either side are the false religionists of the day, who have made an outward profession of religion, while their hearts remain unchanged—a profession without grace in the heart. The inhabitants were natural men and women, who had gone there through some fleshly motive. The plain house in the way is the church, which has nothing about it fascinating to the natural man; but the material was all prepared and brought to the building, and every piece is placed where the Lord ordained it. My being so feeble, hungry and thirsty, I think fitly represents my travelling here. If I am a child at all, I am a poor, feeble one, less than the least; and O the obstacles in the way, and what a rough and rugged road I have! Yea, I am a poor cripple, and I cannot get to the King's table unless I am carried. My eyes have been overflowing with tears for some time. I have been made to think seriously about my future destiny of late. O my soul! I see so much pollution in me, how can I claim an interest in that glorious inheritance? If I can be the Lord's, I am willing to bear all here. I know nothing, but that I am a dreadful sinner. After all, I may be mistaken at last. I cannot keep myself one hour without Jesus. I need him all the time. But O! after I have passed over the rugged road here, if I can be taken into the paradise of God it is enough. Pray for poor me.

Yours in tribulation,  
LEE HANCKS.  
OZARK, Ala.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Dec. 6, 1887.

"THEN they that feared the Lord spake often one with another;" and I believe that this is one of the ways that God has appointed for his children to know each other's mind and feelings, and be a comfort to each other while on this pilgrimage journey. There are many of the dear family of God that only know of each other in this way of corresponding. How good and merciful our God is to appoint everything needful for the comfort of his poor and afflicted people. All things are yours. Can you ask for anything more?

Brother Beebe, if you think best, publish the experience of sister Fisher. I felt very much comforted in reading it, and I believe that others will.

Your brother in hope,  
M. VAIL.

AUDRAIN COUNTY, Mo., Nov. 20, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—I fear you asked more of me than I am able to perform, when you asked me to write you my experience. I have never been able to give dates, as so many can do. I was raised by christian parents, and in my nineteenth year united with the "Christian Church" (or "Campbellite," as it is called by some), that being the church of which both my parents were members. I lived along quietly for four years before I began to feel at all dissatisfied; indeed, I was quite at rest so far as my eternal salvation was concerned, for I had been taught that by leaving off worldly amusements, uniting with the church, confessing before men that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of sinners, being baptized, and living a moral life, was sufficient to carry me to the portals of glory. When I first began to feel dissatisfied I did not know what was the matter, and supposed it was because I was not living up to my duty. Then I began to read the Bible all my spare time, and during one summer I read the New Testament through three times. There I found very much to condemn me. I often asked my parents their views on different portions of Scripture, and the explanations they gave failed to satisfy me. They would often tell me I was holding to the Old Baptist doctrine, and then I would almost be offended with them; for I thought the Old Baptists were a few, unpopular, unreasonable people, who preached little babes into hell. I never heard an Old Baptist sermon from my childhood until I was twenty-four years old, and all I knew of them was what I had heard of them, and that was no good. Once there came a preacher of our order to preach at the church of which we were all members. He said he would preach on the subject of Predestination. He proposed to take the Bible straight, from one end to the other, and explain everything on that subject to the entire satisfaction of all inquiring minds. My father said, "We must go. I want Janie to hear that." But his sermon was not any comfort to me. As we were returning to our home my mother asked me if I was satisfied with what I had heard. I told her that he did me no good at all. I felt sure I was not doing enough good works, which was the cause of all this unrest; so I attended very regularly to my Sunday School, and also to my prayers; but in all this I found no relief. One evening I went away alone to pray, and when I got down on my knees I was filled with the most agonizing fear that I had ever endured. I did not speak one word, but arose to my feet and looked about me to see if any one was near; and as I stood there for a little while it seemed to me that I was the most wicked wretch alive. It seemed to me that the devil was surely there with me, and I ran away as fast as I

could. My mind was more at ease some times, and I tried very hard to keep it all a secret; but I was often accused of being an Old Baptist. At length, after I was married, my husband found out that I was in trouble, and so did the preacher at the Old School Baptist Church where my husband was a member (I had now quit going to the "Christian" meetings). I found great pleasure in being with the Baptists, but I did not want them to know it. I now began to feel as if I would give anything in the world to be one of their number; but I was sure that could never be, for they were good, and I was all unworthiness. The minister once asked me if I could not talk to the church and tell them of my hope; but my only answer was, "I cannot;" yet the greatest desire of my heart was to do so. On Tuesday before the first Saturday in August, 1874, the difficulty passed away from me instantly, and I felt that I could go before the church, and I was so overjoyed that I could scarcely wait for Saturday to come. When the time came, and the door of the church was announced as open for the reception of members, I went forward, told them something, but I hardly know what. They asked me some questions, and I suppose they were satisfied with me; for I was received into the church, and was baptized the next day. Since then I have had many ups and downs; but I claim a hope in Christ through his righteousness, and not for any good in myself. I often feel that if others knew me as I know myself, they could have no fellowship for me. I often tremble for myself, and scarcely dare to believe that I am what I profess to be, and am sometimes almost tempted to say, Surely I am mistaken, and have deceived the church. But I cannot give up, for I find my greatest comfort (in fact my only real pleasure) is in trusting myself and all that I have to the will of God. When I am in doubt I often think of the lines,

"Could we but make those doubts remove,  
Those gloomy doubts that rise."

Sometimes I am blessed with full confidence, and can rejoice in my Savior. If there is any one spiritual blessing that I could desire more than another, it is to be submissive to the will of God.

Dear brother, if you see anything in this worthy of notice, do as you wish with it. If you cast it into the stove it will all be right with me.

JANIE D. FISHER.

OLIVET, Iowa, Dec. 17, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Yesterday evening my wife called my attention to the editorial in the SIGNS of December 15th. We looked that matter over, as well as we could, and found that the test question is predestination, and that you are losing patronage because you believe and advocate said doctrine. Also, we looked over that article over the signature of J. Rowe.

Now, dear brethren, as to whether it is best to lay that matter before the church, I cannot say; but if the church is not satisfied with your views, it is her duty to complain of you, instruct and admonish you. As editors, you can but do and say just as you see and believe. So go on, my brethren, and defend the doctrine of predestination; for it is God's truth, sustained and upheld both by the word of truth and in the works of nature. This I said in my short article in the SIGNS, page 44, volume 55, that not more true that the sun is the light of day, than is predestination true. They are equally manifest demonstrations, and need no argument. To quit preaching predestination is but to quit preaching that God is, and that in his hands are all events. I find no place to stop, and God forbid that I should ever try. Hence fellowship for that which denies the sovereign rule and providence of God is impossible. Yes, I repeat, it is impossible. But suppose you say, just as David did, "Let him curse." You know, too, that the servants of God have to pass through manifold temptations, which are for the trial of their faith; but the hardest trial of all is to see and hear brethren deny the true and only basis on which our hope is sustained and upheld. Take from me the doctrine of predestination, and I can but say, I have no hope.

Now, brethren, you may say the above for me, and also say that I can find no fellowship for the denial of predestination. And further, after looking over the premises on which you are attacked, you may continue sending me the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and, if I am so that I can, I will send on the remittance; but if I shall be called hence, and no one hands it in, just say for me that the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

AARON WOOD.

PATERSON, N. J., Dec., 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In First Thessalonians ii. 18 Paul says that "Satan hindered us." I would like Elder Wm. L. Beebe's views on this passage, or the views of any one else; for I cannot understand Paul to mean that he was neglectful or indifferent in the performance of his duties. If the obstacles were insurmountable, I do not feel that he would have so expressed himself.

O how often I long for the society of the dear Old Baptists, that we may talk together of these things. I cannot correspond as I once did, for I no longer have a few hours each Sunday to myself, and interruptions confuse me so much that I cannot send what I do write. At times I feel very despondent. I know that the Lord does not willingly afflict the children of men; and so, while acknowledging his justice, I am made to feel that my unthankfulness and disobedience have brought me where I am. O that I could have honored my Lord more and served him better. Yes, my Lord, I hope; for in the

midst of my sadness my heart is singing,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds." Very many sweet hymns of promise are my helping companions by the way, so that I feel encouraged to write you, and to say, "Come, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together." I feel to look forward, too, for what I have so much desired. A sister of our order has removed here recently; and although not convenient now, it is our earnest desire to have meetings at her house; and I believe that Elders Beebe and Jenkins will not refuse our request when we are ready to make it, as they pass through here to New York City, after sister Payne has removed to a more convenient locality. How thankful I should feel, and I trust I do at times, that I have found those who understand the order of God's house; those who wholly rely on the just and unchangeable God, wholly ignoring all creature efforts; who can tell us of the good things of the kingdom, of their hope and trust in God, because he is unchangeable, and of his wonderful dealings with them in their varied experiences. Though careful of their duties, yet they know that it is the work of the Lord to believe on his name. Yes, in affliction, in prosperity, in all the changing scenes of time, this only is required, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God."

I highly approve of Elder Rittenhouse's views in regard to funeral occasions, for I am subject to just such unreasonable usages, or subjected, I should say. I never would conform to such a custom, were it under my management. Elder Hassell says in his Church History that future generations will look back to the nineteenth century as "abounding in ignorance;" and I will add, "slavish conformity," especially by our so-called religious world. May we truly come out from among them practically. "Come, let us reason together, saith the Lord." So may not we reason together also in all things pertaining to our conduct in rational affairs? I have had abundant cause to say in the past few months that the Old Baptists do possess that charity which vaunteth not itself. They give willingly to those in need, and especially to the household of faith, and are too humble to desire to have their generosity extolled by the press, or stand up in the pew while their name is called.

I have written so lengthily that I must close, with the earnest request that we may live honestly in the sight of all men, abhor dissimulation, abstain from all evil, and cleave to that which is good. The foregoing is very imperfect, like the writer. If you do not desire to publish it, I submit.

Yours in love of the truth,  
M. HELLINGS.

BROOKLYN, N. Y., Dec. 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Another year has rolled around, which

reminds me of my remittance for the SIGNS. I am not able to write much, but I must testify to the goodness of my God, and with the psalmist say that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I desire to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, even forever. I must tell you how much I esteem your messenger of love. It raises my drooping spirits to know that my dear brethren and sisters tell my travels and conflicts. All are in harmony, for all have been taught of the same Spirit. All ascribe all the honor and glory to him for their deliverance from the bonds of sin and Satan, and who has made them conquerors through the Lamb's redeeming blood. If I were capable of writing to the edification of the Zion of God, how glad I would be. I am thinking that I ought to be very thankful that the dear Lord has helped me to scribble these few lines in testifying of his great goodness.

Yours in hope of a blessed immortality,

ELIZABETH BEESLEY.

PHILIPPI, W. Va., Dec. 10, 1887.

ELDER W. L. BEEBE—BELOVED BROTHER FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—Will you give your opinion through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in relation to receiving members from what is termed the Clark party? Is it good order to receive them into our fellowship without confessing their faults, after they have denounced us as heretics and Arians, and after they have received into their fellowship members who have been excommunicated from our fellowship upon charges well sustained in the church? Is it good order to receive their baptism, that is, to receive those who were baptized by them while in their disorder? These things are coming upon our churches, and we desire the best information that we can get upon the subject for the peace and prosperity of Zion.

Please answer by the first opportunity, and oblige the household of faith.

J. S. CORDER.

(Editorial reply on page 21.)

NEW CASTLE, Del., Dec. 26, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I do hope the Lord may sustain you in advocating the doctrine of the Bible. Brethren who are not established in the truth may forsake you by withdrawing their patronage, yet I trust the Lord will direct others to help you by their support. Sooner than to have the publishers of the SIGNS become embarrassed financially, and abandon the publication of such a precious family paper, which contends so earnestly for the truth as it is in Jesus, I for one would rather pay double the present subscription price.

Dear brother William L. Beebe, I cannot see where you are in error in withdrawing fellowship from Elder J. Rowe. Inclosed find money-order for six dollars and fifty cents.

Yours in fellowship,

P. M. SHERWOOD.

## CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Pilgrims' Rest Association of Old School Predestinarian Baptists, in session with Big Blue Church, in Johnson County, Kansas, October 7th, 8th and 9th, 1887, to the churches composing her body, sendeth christian salutation.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—As we expect to present you with the Minutes of our associational proceedings, we will also send you a short epistle of love, hoping thereby to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. We find by reading the holy Scriptures that God's children have always been in the minority, persecuted by the world, and spoken evil of by all other sects; but Jesus says, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." And, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37. Then, brethren, can you not see that the christian's hope is centred in Christ Jesus? For we are saved by grace, and not by works, lest any man should boast.—Eph. ii. 8, 9. "Not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us [the church] in Christ Jesus before the world began." "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."—1 Peter i. 20. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Rom. viii. 29-31. Then, brethren, who shall separate us from the love of Christ?—See Rom. viii. 35-39. Dear brethren, if Christ so loved us, ought we not to love each other? "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "God is love," and "we love him because he first loved us."—1 John iv. 19. This love is made manifest by a godly walk and conversation. Then "let brotherly love continue." Strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The psalmist says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. Watch, for Christ says that false christs shall arise; and, if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect. "Behold, I have told you before." Then, dear brethren, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised; and "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. Brethren, may we all be possessed with meekness and a humble spirit while traveling

these low grounds of sorrow, watching over each other in love, each esteeming his brother better than himself. "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." May "the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever."

L. GRIMSLEY, Mod.

WM. L. HALL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Pilgrims' Rest Association, to the associations with which she corresponds.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—God has been pleased to have us meet together once more as a little association in love and fellowship, for which we would feel thankful to him. We have received the correspondence of the associations with whom we correspond in love and fellowship. The dear preaching brethren have come to us preaching peace by Jesus Christ, greatly to our comfort and the glory of God. We desire a continuance of your sweet correspondence. For the time and place of our next meeting we refer you to our Minutes.

L. GRIMSLEY, Mod.

WM. L. HALL, Clerk.

LARGE HYMN BOOK FOR A DOLLAR, SIX FOR FOUR DOLLARS AND A HALF.

We have just had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

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"THE EDITORIALS."

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

WE have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JANUARY 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF G. BEEBE'S SONS.

RESTORING DISORDERLY MEMBERS.

IN compliance with the request of our esteemed brother, Elder J. S. Corder, on page 20, we submit the following thoughts to the consideration of our readers generally, and of our inquiring brother in particular. While it might be sufficient in the case referred to in the inquiry to say how we regard the position of those who have been separated from the fellowship of the church by the disorder specified, we do not feel that we have the right to give a decision in the matter, as each church must determine for herself the qualifications of her own membership. Of course it must be remembered that when a church rejects the law of Christ in any action, she thereby becomes subject to the condemnation of that law, and is herself in disorder. It is manifest that as the individual members of the church are liable to become carnal and walk as men, so a whole organized church may be led into confusion by following the directions of carnal reason instead of minding the guidance of the Spirit of Christ.

While by no means presuming to obtrude advice, and much less to dictate to orderly churches what they should do in any case involving the expression of fellowship, we may say that there is never any danger of being too careful in the observance of the law of Christ in every action of the church which claims to be subject to him as her Lord. Failure to observe his commandments is a declaration of unwillingness to have him to rule over us. Hence it is very important that we should be careful to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded his disciples to do.—Matt. xxviii. 20. All consistent christians believe that the law of Christ is perfect, and consequently no case ever can arise in the church for which she is left without suitable instruction in that law. All seeming deficiency results from failure on our part to understand the instruction given. Reason is ever ready to supplement the divine rule with suggestions which seem plausible; but like the way which seemeth right unto a man, of which Solomon speaks, the end of such unauthorized devices is the ways of death.—Prov. xiv. 12. Since the organized church was established in Jerusalem the saints have often proved by sad experience the truth of this inspired proverb. There is no path of perfect safety for the saints but in implicit obedience to the directions given by inspiration for their government. In obedience to that rule the simplest child is always sure to be free from

condemnation. Whenever bewildered by the complicated forms of trouble which constantly arise to try the dear saints, they have a sure refuge in the direction, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth unto all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."—James i. 5. There is no promise given in this text to any who feel that they have sufficient wisdom to direct their own steps. The lack of wisdom must be realized before they can ask in faith as here enjoined. This forbids the presumption of all who would dictate to the Lord what wisdom they desire. Hence those who are led by that carnal spirit which desires to obtain a selfish end through the external observance of the forms prescribed by the law of Christ, will always fail to receive the answer to their petition when asking in that spirit. Only the prayer of faith is ever accepted and answered by the Lord, who hears the prayers of all his saints.

In the case of all personal transgressions there is provision for labor to save the transgressor from the pain of exposure even to the censure of the church, if God shall give him repentance, as plainly stated in the directions given in Matthew xviii. 15-17. This law will apply to a very large portion of the troubles which arise among the followers of Jesus while sojourning in this world; but there are some cases to which this direction does not apply. When a member of the visibly organized church either by word or deed so palpably denies the revealed truth of God as to become a reproach to the profession he has made, it is evident that no verbal confession could restore the confidence of the church in the transgressor; such have sinned unto death, and must be cut off from the fellowship of the church by an actual exclusion, as they have already cut themselves off by their transgression.—See 1 Cor. v. 1-5; 1 Tim. i. 20; v. 20; Titus i. 10, 11.

Too much importance cannot be attached to the strict observance of the rule of gospel order, which the faithful servants of Christ should at all times hold over the flock of God, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers. There can be no healthy growth in the church where this is neglected. When the rule is carefully observed there will be such a manifestation of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace that the church will be invincibly established, so that no assault of error can break the solid resistance of that pillar and ground of the truth. In such a church none will ever be excluded without the authority of the Lord Jesus, and consequently there can never be an occasion when the church herself is in error. Even in the apostolic age the neglect of this rule resulted in such gross disorder as to call for severe reproof and solemn warning. It is not to be forgotten that the warnings and admonitions left on record are all for our

instruction. There is not less liability to error in the present time than when the apostles were personally with the churches. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." In walking according to the spirit of the law of Christ, the church will never be at a loss for express directions in every case which can arise; it is only when following some other guide that there is liability to be perplexed by difficulties for which there seems to be no provision in the perfect law of our King. Being thus constantly reminded of their dependence upon the grace of God for direction in all cases, when led by the Spirit the saints can never be exalted in self-reliance. Every one, considering his own liability to be tempted, will ever be ready to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. But by the same Spirit they will be led to resist every attempt to introduce divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they have learned, and to avoid those who bring such errors in their teaching.—Rom. xvi. 17. There is no limit to the forbearance which the saints may extend to those who trespass against them personally; but they are not authorized to violate the law of Christ in tolerating false teachers, who pervert the doctrine of God our Savior, and change the truth of God into a lie.—Rom. i. 25. In bearing with such opposers of the truth the church would be partakers of their evil deeds.—See 1 Tim. v. 22; 2 John 11. Upon the principle of this inspired direction every case of discipline must be determined, if the church would be found in subjection to the law of Christ.

It is impossible for any finite being to decide intelligently upon the application of this principle to individual instances of which the circumstances cannot be clearly known without full examination. Hence, it would be manifestly unwise for any one to render a decision upon such a case. It is safe to assume that every church is best qualified to administer discipline and judge of the qualifications of her own members. Of course this must include a due consideration of the equal authority of other churches in fellowship. This results in the obligation of every church to walk in accordance with the inspired rule as written in the only standard, the New Testament. When fellowship has been broken it is impossible that both parties should be walking in the order of the gospel; and it is inconsistent for such to pretend to be reconciled without the confession of error on either side. It is strange that any should desire to unite with the church after they have denounced it, as Elder Corder states that the parties have done, who now seek to be restored to a professed unity in gospel fellowship. If the church can receive them without confession of their fault and the justice of their

exclusion, it involves the confession of error on the part of the church in their action when they withdrew fellowship from them; if they never did withdraw fellowship from them, then there is no occasion for restoring it. If, on the other hand, there are those who have denounced the church "as heretics and Arians," and "have received into their fellowship members who have been excommunicated from our fellowship upon charges well sustained in the church," it is beyond our comprehension to understand how they can desire to be in fellowship with those whom they have thus denounced, unless they have seen their error. In that case, it would seem consistent that they would desire to confess their fault even though the church did not require it of them.

The decision of the second question presented by Elder Corder is included in what has already been written. If the parties claiming to be churches are in the fellowship of the church of Christ, then their acts are valid both in receiving and in excluding members. If they are not themselves in the fellowship of the church when such action is taken by them, then the church can no more acknowledge their acts as in order than if they had been performed by those who never claimed the name of christians. There can be no higher tribunal among men than the church of the living God. When acting in submission to the law of Christ everything done by such church is the action of the Lord himself, and is clothed with all the authority of his eternal sovereignty; but nothing bears that seal of divine authority unless it is done in obedience to his commandment. It is evident from the inspired record that a church may err in doctrine or discipline without losing her standing as a recognized church of Christ; but it is not in our power to say just how far she may depart from the gospel rule in either respect without forfeiting her visibility as a church. Very gross departures were reprov'd in both these respects by the apostles, in the recognized churches in the primitive age. In doctrine the churches of Galatia, and in practice the church at Corinth, had gone very far astray; yet they were still recognized as churches. May the grace of God keep all who love the Lord Jesus from finding by personal experience the limit where they are no longer to be borne with. So long as they are recognized by the inspired standard as retained in the fellowship of the church, there is no question that all their acts in receiving or excluding members are valid and binding upon all churches in that fellowship; but when they have been cut off from the fellowship of the saints, whether by their own act in dissolving their connection, or by the authorized action of other churches who have withdrawn from them, there can be no more propriety in recognizing any of the subsequent acts of those thus cut off from fellow-

ship than there would be in the case of those who never professed to be in union with the church. Hence, in every case the propriety of receiving the work of any minister or church will depend upon the question whether they were acting in the fellowship of the church of Christ at the time when they did the things to be considered. It is certainly clear that if one whom the church has recognized as a minister of Christ should be justly excluded from fellowship, the church could not consistently receive any of his subsequent work as valid in the gospel ministry, unless he had first been restored to the fellowship of the church. Without the observance of this principle all discipline in the church would be an idle form; since exclusion would amount to nothing if the very defiance of the authority of the church were held to be sufficient ground of acceptance for the acts of those whom she had excluded. Such a view of the effect of this final and most extreme visitation of the judgment of the church would subvert all practical discipline, and transform the church into a chaotic mass of disorganized rabble.

From what we have written it will be seen that to our view there is no propriety in recognizing anything done by those who are not at the time of such action in fellowship with the church. As to the facts in any particular case, we do not claim to be competent to decide without a clear and complete understanding of the whole matter involved. Even then, every one who is spiritual is certainly as competent as we (and in all probability more so) to determine the right course to be pursued. While the saints remain in this temporal state of existence there will be continual offenses and divisions among them; and the apostle says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."—1 Tim. iv. 1, 2. It is not strange, therefore, that the church in all ages has had to experience the sifting which has developed the carnality of such as depart from the truth. When those who once were accounted members of the church have been cut off by the just execution of the law of the Lord, there is no way in which they can be restored but by individually giving evidence of repentance. Restoration upon any other ground involves the confession that the church was in error in their exclusion; and that is not the restoration of the excluded party to the church, but it is the restoration of the church to those who were excluded. In any case, if the church is satisfied that she has done wrong in withdrawing fellowship from one or more of her members, it is her duty and privilege to reverse such action, and seek restoration to the fellowship of those against whom she has thus grievous-

ly sinned. There is no more noble action even among men than the brave and honest confession of conscious error; much more should they who are led by the Spirit of God be ever ready to confess their faults and retrace their erring steps, whether as individuals or as organized churches. In such confession he who can conscientiously and truthfully most unreservedly yield a full acknowledgment of his transgression has attained the highest honor. To attempt to evade or withhold anything is as fatal to the peace of the parties making a confession as was the effort of Ananias when he sought to keep back part of the price of the possession which he had sold.—Acts v. On the other hand, where the Spirit of Christ has moved an erring one to confess his fault, there will be no more disposition to avoid a full confession of his error than in the case of the repenting prodigal.—Luke xv. When this spirit is seen in the offender, the feeling of them who are led by the Spirit will not be slow to respond to it. There will not be any disposition to exact the uttermost farthing of confession, but the fellowship of suffering will be manifest in the melting of hearts in perfect love. In such a reconciliation the carnal passions of the natural mind can no more be present than unclean Egyptians might witness the sacred scene when Joseph revealed himself to his brethren.—Gen. xlv. In such a case as this there is no question of how to restore fellowship; the love of Christ has burned up every obstacle in the way of its manifestation, and the first thing that the parties at variance know of it is when they are seeking each to assume all the blame of the trouble, which seems to them like the memory of a horrid dream.

While deprecating all those false proposals for securing compromise with error by the sacrifice of truth, we would most earnestly pray for that peace of Jerusalem which cometh alone from the Lord.

#### THE CHURCHES UNANIMOUS.

In accordance with our statement in last paragraph of editorial remarks on page 282, last volume, we requested the churches of our membership, the Middletown & Wallkill and the Warwick, at their regular meeting, December 31st, 1887, for an expression as to our course in denouncing the article of J. Rowe, and withdrawing fellowship from the writer; and the Middletown & Wallkill Church passed the following preamble and resolution, viz.:

"The Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church, at her regular monthly meeting, December 31st, 1887, unanimously adopted the following preamble and resolution:

"WHEREAS, A charge has been publicly brought against our brother, B. L. Beebe, as one of the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for denouncing the article of Elder J. Rowe in the *Gospel Messenger* for September, 1887, as 'railing against truth,'

and for withdrawing fellowship from the writer; therefore,

"Resolved, That we heartily and unreservedly indorse the action of brother Beebe in that case; and declare that while we can in love receive those who are weak in the faith, we cannot hold in our fellowship any one who disputes the truth of the predestination of God in all things.

"And the Clerk is hereby ordered to send a copy of this act to the church at Butler, Georgia, and G. Beebe's Sons are requested to publish the same in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

"BENTON JENKINS, Mod.  
"G. A. EMORY, Clerk."

The same action was taken by the Warwick Church, with the exception of substituting the name of William L. Beebe for that of B. L. Beebe, and omitting the order for the Clerk to send a copy of the act to the church at Butler, Georgia, and the request for its publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Both churches were unanimous.

#### SPECIAL OFFER.

PARTIALLY to repay our subscribers for their time and trouble, in procuring for us new subscribers, we will from now until April first, 1888, make the following offer in

#### CASH PREMIUMS.

To any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

#### TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS

and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

#### FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS,

sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

We have received a good many new subscribers since these terms were first published, and we hope the brethren who indorse the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS will feel a personal interest in aiding in the increase of its circulation.

These terms, brethren, are really below what we can afford; but if by this means we shall double our subscription list, and by a little effort on the part of our subscribers it can be done, we will then lower our subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents per year, and run the single sheet of eight pages weekly. Let each subscriber see what he can do.

#### CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

ELDER W. Lively having moved from Montgomery, Ala., to Louvale, Stewart Co., Ga., desires his correspondents to address him hereafter at the latter place.

MARRIAGES.

NOVEMBER 23d, 1887, at the residence of the bride, at Martindale, Caldwell Co., Texas, by Elder M. C. C. Maples, Miss Ara Jennings and Mr. J. C. Anderson, of Bell Co., Texas.

DECEMBER 28, 1887, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. Wm. H. Whitney and Miss Bertha J. Carmichael, both of Little Britain, Orange Co., N. Y.

DECEMBER 25, 1887, at the Cow Marsh Baptist meeting-house, by Elder E. Ritzenhouse, Mr. Willard L. Meredith and Miss Ella, daughter of Peter C. Gruwell, both of Petersburg, Del.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Deacon Godfrey M. Hartsfield departed this life Nov. 20, 1887, aged seventy-five years, seven months and twenty six days.

The subject of this notice was born in Clark Co., Ga., March 24, 1812, and was married to Hittie Sledge, July 19, 1836, with whom he lived happily and pleasantly (his home being a pleasant home for Primitive Baptists) until Dec. 4, 1880, when she was called away by death. Her obituary may be seen in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, 1882. Since that time he has made his home with his son, J. M. Hartsfield, where he received to the last every attention that children could bestow upon a parent. He experienced a hope in Christ in 1832, and in 1836 was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Towaliga, Butts Co., Ga. When the church split upon the institutions, he went with the Primitives, joined the church at High Shoals, in the Towaliga Association, and was ordained deacon in that church, using his office well, purchasing to himself a good degree and great boldness, until 1859, when he took a letter and with his family moved to Columbia Co., Ark. In 1861 or 1862 he joined the church at Fellowship, Columbia Co., Ark. In 1866 he took a letter and joined at Macedonia, in the same county, where he lived a worthy and consistent member, using his office well. He was sound and steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints, firmly believing that salvation is of the Lord. He was loved and respected by all who knew him. He was confined to his room the most of the time for more than twelve months, during which time it pleased the Lord to send some of his servants to his home, to preach his blessed word, which was a great comfort to him. He often spoke of his approaching end, and said he was waiting the Lord's time, and was not afraid to die. He raised a respectable family of children, five of whom survive him, four of them being members of the same church with their father. His disease being of a dropsical nature, he was a great sufferer at times, often thinking his last moment had come; but when the last came he suffered little or no pain, calmly falling asleep in Jesus, without a struggle or groan, leaving a smile on his countenance. Thus the dear old brother died in the full triumphs of a living faith in Christ Jesus. There were none of the brethren present to witness his last moments, except brother Lawson, of Louisiana, who had called in at the time, his company being a great comfort to the family in that hour.

On Monday there assembled at the family grave-yard a company of brethren and friends, where, after a short discourse by the writer, followed by Elder A. L. Turner, his remains were laid in their long resting place.

N. C. YARBROUGH.

At the request of the bereaved friends, I write a few lines in memory of our departed and much beloved sister in the Lord, Mrs. Elizabeth Russell, who died Nov. 18, 1887, in the sixty-second year of her age. She was a worthy and valuable member of Pleasant Grove Church, and

had been for years. Her complaint and last sickness was pleuro-pneumonia, from which she was a constant and great sufferer for about six days. Aunt Lizzy, as she was called, will be greatly missed among us. She was of strong mind and quick to discern a fault in church discipline, and of untiring energy and perseverance in the right. I have known her well from a small girl, and since the death of her husband, fourteen years ago, she has been quite extensively known, and known by all to respect and love her. William B. Russell, her husband, was killed fourteen years ago in a runaway flight with horses. Since a widow, she has made her home with her son-in-law, M. M. Canine. Her maiden name was Elder, a daughter of Alexander Elder, an honored deacon for many years in the Baptist Church. She has left two children to mourn, while they have many sympathizing friends in her large circle of acquaintance, as real partakers of their sorrow. On Sunday, the 20th, what remained of aunt Lizzy was brought to Bethany Church, and near her old home-stead, where she reared her children; and then to a very attentive and heart-stricken congregation, Elder M. B. Moffett preached a very able and consoling discourse, from 2 Corinthians v. 1, after which her remains were laid by the side of her husband in a large cemetery near by, there to rest till God in his majesty and power shall bid her sleeping dust arise. Hymn 901 (Thompson's Collection) I learn was a favorite of hers, which was used upon the occasion, especially the third verse.

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath;  
I hope to praise him after death;  
I hope to praise him when I die,  
And shout salvation as I fly."

While we sorrow in deep contrition of soul, it is not in the absence of a well founded hope that our loss is hardly comparable to her great gain, and would wish to say with honest hearts, Father, not our will, but thine be done.

JOHN OVERMAN.

NEAR ROCKVILLE, Ind., Dec. 28, 1887.

SISTER Rachel Moore died at the home of her sister-in-law, Mrs. A. Moore, near Wheatland, Loudoun Co., Va., Dec. 20, 1887, in the sixty-seventh year of her age. Her strength had been failing for a year or more, but her health continued comparatively good until within a short time of her death. Her disease was complicated. She was taken with a chill and deep cold on the 10th, which in a few days developed into pneumonia, which with other troubles terminated her earthly pilgrimage. She bore her affliction with patience and resignation, was conscious to the end, and passed quietly away into that undisturbed rest that remains to the people of God, of which she experienced many foretastes while tabernacling in the flesh. Besides an extensive acquaintance of brethren, she also leaves many dear relatives and friends, who were devoted to her, and with whom she was a favorite and welcome guest and companion. Sister Rachel was baptized by Elder J. N. Badger (our pastor), and united with the church at Ebenezer several years ago, where she continued a highly esteemed and devoted member until called hence. She manifested her love for the truth by her walk and conversation, and was ever ready, as far as she was able, to administer to the necessities of the brethren, both spiritually and temporally. But her seat at the fireside and in the assemblies of the saints is now vacant, and we are left to mourn her absence. But while we shall miss her counsel and gentle admonitions, we sorrow not as those who have no hope, feeling assured that our loss is her gain. The resurrection of Jesus from death and the grave is an assurance or pledge of the resurrection of his people; for "he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal

bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." And then "shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" With this blessed hope, may the Lord reconcile us to this and every dispensation of his all-wise providence, is our humble prayer.

EDWARD C. TRUSSELL.

SNICKERSVILLE, Va., Dec. 24, 1887.

DIED—In Greenbush, Warren Co., Ill., Dec. 4, 1887, Mrs. Hester Ann Simmons, aged forty-two years, five months and one day. She was a daughter of John and Mary Cunningham, and was united in marriage with Martin V. B. Simmons January 7, 1864, who died September 29, 1877, leaving her and four children to mourn the absence of a beloved husband and father. Mrs. Simmons remained a widow until death, and with all the toil and care of an affectionate mother raised and educated her children in respectability. When she was young she joined a religious society, but for many years attended our meetings in Greenbush, and doubtless died in sympathy with the Regular or Primitive Baptists. She was seriously and peculiarly afflicted for some years before her death, but her last sickness continued but a few hours, when her spirit was called, we hope, to a world where there shall be no more death. She leaves two sons and two daughters to mourn their loss of an affectionate mother.

A large congregation gathered at our church in Greenbush on the third Sunday, instant, and the writer addressed them on the occasion from Proverbs i. 8-10.

ALSO,

DIED—Near Rio, Knox Co., Ill., Dec. 24, 1887, Mrs. Polly Robertson, in the eighty-sixth year of her age.

The deceased was a daughter of Martin and Martha Cox, and was born in Virginia Oct. 8, 1802. The family resided a while in Tennessee, and then in Kentucky, and in 1833 located in Illinois. She was united in marriage with Larkin Robertson while in Kentucky, who died in Illinois Feb. 6, 1869, after serving the Henderson Church as Clerk for many years, and who was a patron of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. "Aunt Polly" joined the same church seventeen or eighteen years ago, and was baptized by Elder R. M. Simmons, and continued in the faith, beloved and respected by the church until death set her spirit free. Her house was a stopping place for Baptists, and she was a highly esteemed sister and excellent neighbor. She became nearly blind and deaf in her last days, and longed to leave her prison and go home.

I was called to the house of mourning by a telegram, and met a large audience at the church of which she was a member, on the 26th, and spoke on the occasion from Psalm lxxi. 9, 18. After the services her remains were laid beside her departed husband, near the church, to wait the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God. She has left four sons and one daughter, and may the Lord bless them.

Your brother in Christ,

I. N. VANMETER.

DIED—At the residence of her aunt, in Ekfrid, Ont., July 28, 1887, Miss Jennie Smith, aged thirty-six years.

The subject of this notice, though never having made a public profession of her hope and faith, gave satisfactory evidence of being a subject of God's grace, and an heir of eternal glory. She has been for many years a constant attendant at the meetings of the saints, and a lover of the doctrine of God our Savior, which at one time she hated and despised. She was quiet, unassuming and gentle in her disposition, and it can be truthfully said of

her that she was respected and beloved by all who knew her. The writer has known her for a long period, and has many times tried to lead or draw out her mind in conversation; but she rarely seemed to wish to speak of her feelings, any further than to tell of her own unworthy condition as a sinner; but once she told me what great comfort she received from these words, "Be still, and know that I am God," though she did not know at the time they were in the Bible. On another time she said to me that she did not fear the punishment of the wicked in hell, but rather the separation from God and everything that was holy; which was clear evidence to my mind that she hungered and thirsted after righteousness; and the Savior says that such shall be filled. Though ailing for some years, her end was very sudden and unexpected; being only confined to the house two or three days. On the evening before she died, in conversation with her aunt she gave very satisfactory evidence that she was born again, of the incorruptible word of God, that liveth forever, and that death to her had lost its sting. She leaves two brothers and many relatives and friends, to whom she was very dear, to mourn their loss, which, we trust, is her eternal gain.

Elder Pollard preached a comforting discourse on the occasion of her funeral, after which her remains were laid to rest until the resurrection morn. S.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of the bereaved widow and children I send you for publication in the SIGNS the death of Elder Lambert Gass, who departed this life at Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., Nov. 23, 1887, aged seventy-four years, six months and three days. His complaint was a severe attack of Bright's disease. He began to complain on Thursday, and died the following Wednesday. Elder Gass united with the Lexington Old School Baptist Church in 1851, and was ordained at Jackson, Mich., in the year 1866, and soon after returned to New York State and preached for some of the churches in the Lexington Association. Finally he bought a house and lot in Lexington, in the bounds of the Lexington Church, and served that church up to the time of his death, with Elder I. B. Whitcomb. In the trouble and trials that he had been called to pass through, he has always stood firm and unshaken in the doctrine of the gospel, and up to the time of his death contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; so it can truly be said of him, He fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith. We feel to mourn our loss, and to sympathize with the bereaved widow and the surviving children in their bereavement of a husband and father, and trust they sorrow not as those who have no hope. We also sympathize with the church in the loss of one of their ministers.

The writer of this notice and Elder Miller were called upon to attend the funeral; but Elder Miller could not attend, on account of his health, and the writer spoke to a large and attentive congregation, from Paul's second letter to Timothy, iv. 6-8. Elder I. B. Whitcomb took part in the services. The remains were deposited in the cemetery at Lexington, Greene Co., N. Y., there to remain till the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God shall sound.

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!  
From which none ever wake to weep;  
A calm and undisturb'd repose,  
Unbroken by the last of foes."

Yours to serve in the bonds of the gospel,

DAVID EARL.

GRIFFIN'S CORNERS, N. Y.

DIED—On Sunday, Nov. 27, 1887, at his late residence in the city of Philadelphia, Joseph S. Tawresey, in the fifty-third year

of his age. His disease was pneumonia, running into typhoid, with which he suffered severely for about nine days, when he closed his earthly pilgrimage. His connection was with the church at Wilmington, which for some years he had faithfully served as Clerk. About six years ago he removed to Philadelphia, retaining his connection with Wilmington Church, and attended alternately, participating in the meetings at both places. His sudden and unexpected death in a midst of a career of usefulness was a great shock and a distressing event to us all. Brother Tawresy was baptized at London Tract, by Elder A. B. Francis, in June, 1879, and shortly after moved his name to Wilmington, where he then resided. Possessed of a meek and humble spirit, the man of grace shone conspicuously in all his after life. Few members ever attain to a higher place in the christian love and confidence of the brethren.

His remains were taken to London Tract to repose beside his honored parents, who formerly were prominent members in that church. A widow and four children, two brothers and one sister, are left to mourn, with whom we all feel to share in this sore trial. In behalf of the church, I feel to close this testimonial with the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

E. RITTENHOUSE.

Our dearly beloved sister, **Katharine Cheatham**, departed this life Feb. 15, 1886. She was consort of James Cheatham, whose obituary notice is given in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of February 1, 1874. Sister Cheatham joined the Primitive Church by experience at Spencer Church, Owsley County, Ky., in 1842. Brother and sister Cheatham moved from Owsley County, to Nicholas County, Ky., from which place they moved to Sangamon County Ill., where they united with Lake Fork Church; lived there thirteen years, then moved to Texas, in the year 1867, and joined Plumb Creek Church, in the year 1868, in Caldwell County, Texas. She was born June 1, 1820, in Montgomery County, Ky.

LOCKHART, Caldwell County, Texas.

From the Lockhart (Texas) Register: "Mrs. Cheatham died at her home, three miles west of town, on the morning of the 15th, of heart disease, and was buried in the town cemetery the next day. Mrs. Cheatham had reached the ripe old age of sixty-six years. Death claimed her in an hour and a half after she was first apprised of being sick. She passed away before the doctor reached her. This old lady was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for many years, and lived a straightforward and godly life. Children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren are left to mourn her loss. Peace to the ashes of this good old lady."

**DIED**—At her home in Coatesville, Pa., April 10, 1887, **Susan F. Patrick**, in her seventy-eighth year.

Sister Patrick was born in St. Matthew Co., Va., and moved with her husband to Pennsylvania in 1833. She became acquainted with the Old School Baptists about 1841, through the visits of Eld. T. Barton, and was baptized in 1868 in the fellowship of the London Tract Church, by Elder Grafton, and remained firm until death. Her disease was consumption. During her illness she never complained, but was resigned to the will of the Lord, telling me the last time I visited her that she could not stay with us always. We all miss her very much, as her mind was firm, and her trust was in the blood of the Lamb. She passed away very peacefully, bidding her family good-by.

Elder Staton attended the funeral and spoke to a large number of friends and acquaintances, and her body was laid in the tomb, to wait the resurrection morn.

Your sister in hope,

S. E. MATHIAS.

I SEND, by request of the bereaved husband, for publication in the SIGNS the obituary notice of his beloved wife, **Pheme Campbell Smith**, who was born Jan. 1, 1865, was married to Mr. George Smith, of Ekfrid, Jan. 28, 1885, and died Oct. 12, 1887, being in the twenty-second year of her age. She with her afflicted husband was a constant attendant at our meetings. Her health gave way shortly after her marriage, and it soon became evident that her end was fast approaching. She was confined to her bed but a day or two before her spirit took its flight. She appeared to become reconciled, and expressed the wish that I should be sent for to preach at the funeral, which I tried to do, to a large audience of sorrowing relatives and sympathizing friends, from Rev. xx. 6. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection," &c.

WM. POLLARD.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—

I send you the obituaries of our two little daughters. The eldest, **Jennie E.**, was called away on November 20, 1887, aged six years and eight days. She was sick but a few days, with membranous croup. The Lord loved her better than we could and has taken her to himself, where she can praise and glorify his most holy name in a world that shall never end.

ALSO,

We had scarcely laid Jennie in the grave when the messenger of death entered again and took our little **Kittie Mabel** from our arms, to that bright and better land where parting is not known, and where all is peace and joy. She died on the 23d, just three days later, aged two years, six months and twenty-seven days. The Lord has sorely afflicted us; but he giveth, and he taketh away, and blessed be his holy name.

"There is no death: what seems so is transition.

This life of mortal breath is but a suburb of the life elysian,

Whose portal we call death."

Your brother in hope,

AMOS BRANDENBURG.

CORYDON, Ind.

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Mrs Benj Vail, 2, H McColl, 2, Hillard Roper 2 50, J C Morris 2 50 Mrs Lydia Dixon 2, Albert Taggart 2, Atlas J Gilbert 2, W H Mullis 2 50, Thos Butcher 2 50, Dr J Q Howell 5, J H Sanders 2, Mrs Cath A Gaines 4, Mrs Martha Jackson 2, Ira Stevens 2 50, Wm Slade 16, Mrs Sarah Gould 2, R R Guernsey 2 50, Ed Henderson 2, J H Knigten 2, J O Battle 2, Joseph A Lassiter 4, Peace A Ballard 2 50, D L Hitchcock 13 50, J T Eason 2, H V M King 2.—Total \$86 00.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1888.

NO. 3.

## POETRY.

### HEBREWS XI. 14.

BESET on every hand  
By snares of every kind,  
I cannot my own thoughts command,  
Nor comfort find.  
I've traveled to and fro,  
In many, many roads,  
Until I could no farther go,  
Because of goods.  
O what a barren land  
Am I made to possess!  
Before, behind, on every hand,  
A wilderness.  
In vain I seek for fruit  
Of Eden's pleasant taste;  
There's nothing found my mind to suit  
In such a waste.  
Though Babylon's flowers bloom,  
And Egypt's bread is found,  
I loathe that city's best perfume,  
And Egypt's ground.  
I long for higher things,  
I seek a better land,  
Where hope shall end in sweetest  
strains,  
That never end.

T. COLE.

ROYALTON, Ohio.

### LIFE'S LESSON.

TUNE—"I WOULD NOT LIVE ALWAY."

THEY tell me life's noble, a joyous estate;  
But O I have sorrows too deep to relate;  
The anticipations of youth were all vain,  
And darksome the prospect of years that remain.  
I mourn for the present, I brood o'er the  
past,  
And haste to the prospect of dying at  
last;  
I weary of waiting, yet tremble with  
fear,  
Whenever the presence of death seemeth  
near.  
O God of my being, to thee I would call,  
When tempests and darkness and terrors  
enthrall;  
When hope seemeth fainting, and strength  
in decay,  
Be thou my dear helper, my guide and  
my stay.  
Protect me from every appearance of  
sin,  
From every opposer without or within;  
From the sins of presumption, rebellion  
or pride;  
Be thou my dear Savior, my Shepherd  
and Guide.  
When darkness envelops the earth in its  
fold,  
When passion runs riot for lust or for  
gold,  
When friendship proves faithless, and  
enemies scorn,  
When truth is deserted, and I am forlorn.  
Resign me to every event of my fate;  
More cheerfully teach me to labor and  
wait;  
To lovingly cherish thy smile and thy rod,  
As the tokens of love of my Father and  
God.  
Thus taught, I would cheerfully bear  
every strife;  
For each tribulation but leads me to life,  
Where I shall live always, eternally free  
from labor and sorrow, in union with  
thee.

A. B. BREES.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### PSALM XXXI. 15.

"My times are in thy hand."

DEAR BRETHREN:—As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet have trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what yet lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what my lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pilgrim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future. But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, than it is true that he is equally sovereign in all the providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with his Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a "God of providence" as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual

exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they believed that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, "It is the Lord." Now it has seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshiped had ordained all their paths for them, and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine rule I can rest. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof."—Psalm xcvi. I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence or grace toward me, but I am sure that he—his will, purpose, love and grace—will be everywhere. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him;" and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that from the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforeseen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, "My times are in thy hand," and they

have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, overruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going. Who can bind either leviathan or the serpent? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be remembered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he confessed and rejoiced in. Many of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exult that he—his times—were in the hands of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that "his times" were in the hands of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah are infinite. The finite can-

not comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, "My times are in thy hand." Right here I am reminded that another and a greater than David, "he who was David's Lord," also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark), or "as it was determined."—Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, "Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born." Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and tempt us after this fashion. David was a great man, and he had a great work to do; and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hands of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hands of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot where it could be said, This did not come from God? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for or dread, that guardian has in his own

control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidently and joyfully confesses, "All my times are in his hand. He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him." So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that it is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's hands. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and salvation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, "I was silent, because thou didst it." And Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." We learn that our times of trial, in whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works "all things after the counsel of his own will;" all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, "My times are in thy hand."

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty-eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul here takes strong ground: "We know." He takes broad ground: "That all things." He takes comforting ground: "Work together for good." He takes discriminating ground: "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have just said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, "All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he says precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, naked-

ness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." We are "more than conquerors." That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; but his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, "My times are in thy hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister, whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, "it is the Lord." All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in her room, and said to her, "Think who has done it." Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, "The Lord has done it." This time of her trouble was in the hands of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as before. Our times are in the hands of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other

according to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that veil. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hands.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill,  
My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., December, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—With your permission I will write for publication in the SIGNS, by the request of an aged brother, of Otego, Otsego Co., N. Y., upon the following words, "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."—Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.

Before attempting an elucidation of this wonderful subject in my weak way, I will say for the comfort and instruction (I hope) of my dear aged brother, and the readers of the SIGNS generally, that all we read, all we hear, and all that may be written, about it, can only be understood by the unspeakable gift of God by faith unto his dear children, when led in the pathway of the just, as in their experience they feel that Jesus has put them forth, and is going before them, in the teaching they receive by the Spirit of truth taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto them; for only by revelation can any know God, and only by faith is it possible to please him. There is therefore, by revelation of the Lord, given unto his people only those things that are for their spiritual growth and comfort, to testify of the gospel of his grace, whether he is revealed as the Son of God or as the Son of man. As the Son of God he comes forth with the life of the Father in him. As the Son of man he comes forth with the authority to

execute judgment, having all judgment committed to him of his Father. In this he comes forth to meet the law's demands, as foretold by prophecy. "He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." As all the tribes of Israel came to David unto Horeb to make him king, they were his bone and his flesh. He was then thirty years old. So our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was about thirty years of age when he came to be acknowledged as King of the Jews. His people are his flesh and his bone. As David took the stronghold of Zion and dwelt there, so our Savior conquered his enemies and dwells in his Zion as the spiritual King. He chooses his disciples, gives them the keys of the kingdom, and tells them that he must suffer many things, be killed, and be raised up the third day. The Son of man is betrayed and brought before Pilate, who says, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."—John xix. 11, 12. Therefore being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, wickedness falls upon the head of the wicked. The wrath of man praises God, and the remainder of wrath he restrains. Men cannot exceed his will. All his counsel must stand.

The Son of man was crucified. Darkness was over the land for three hours. He yielded up the spirit, when he had cried with a loud voice. The vail of the temple was not now parted at the bottom to admit an earthly high priest, but was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. The Scriptures were being fulfilled concerning him. Not a bone of him was broken. He was laid in the sepulchre of Joseph; but when the third day came, the stone over the sepulchre, nor the seal upon it, nor the armed men, could suffice to keep our Redeemer in the sepulchre. An angel of the Lord descends from heaven, the earth quakes and the rocks are rent. "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." He that was dead is alive forevermore, and has the keys of death and the grave.

The angel announced his resurrection to the women that were early at the sepulchre, saying, "Fear not; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay; and go quickly, and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you." The heavens are about to drop down the new wine of the kingdom; the robe of righteousness is to be put upon the favored people of the Lord; the church of the living Lord is to arise from under

the law and shine, because the glory of the Lord is risen upon her, and in the gospel costume she shall go forth forever.

Again, Jesus visits his disciples when the doors were shut because of fear of the Jews. He came and stood in their midst, saying, "Peace be unto you," showing them his hands, and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus again unto them, "Peace be unto you. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."—See John xx. 19-22.

Thus are the Scriptures fulfilled, and the love of the Father made manifest, as saith Jesus, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Now I think I have written enough to show the truth, as I view it, in regard to the coming and kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who alone could atone for the sins of his body, the church, as the head and life, to satisfy the demand of God's holy law, bring in everlasting righteousness, and declare the eternal justification of all the chosen people, in which his pleasure was to be accomplished, and all his counsel to stand; with whom there is nothing impossible; for what his soul desireth, that he doeth. As saith the preacher, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him." Hence in all the work of salvation (which is of the Lord alone) he has spoken, and it is done. Therefore if we keep in mind the wisdom and power, as we speak or write unto the faithful in Christ, that pure and peaceable wisdom from above will edify and encourage the saints; and there is none so weak in faith or limited in ability but may get a crumb, as they feel the working of this almighty power in their hearts, which was able to open the graves.

"And the graves were opened." This wonderful exhibition of the almighty power of the Creator of the universe, who had by prophecy said, "That I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people," having sent the Deliverer out of Zion, has turned all the ungodliness away from Jacob. All power is now in the hand of our Redeemer; therefore the quaking of the earth, the rending of the rocks, the opening of the graves also. "He is the Rock; his work is perfect." By the prophet Hosea he says, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance

shall be hid from mine eyes." Now our Redeemer appears as the good Shepherd of the sheep, of the one fold. The middle wall of partition is now broken down; death is by him abolished to all his people; life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel; he has destroyed him that had the power of death, and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage; none of whom had given to him, to be recompensed to them again; for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen.—Rom. xi. 34-36. Jesus appears as the first begotten from the dead, the first-born of every creature; the antitypical wave sheaf. A full crop is certain to be gathered; for all the Father gave him are certain to come to him; for as he is raised up, he will draw all his chosen people to him; for the opening of the graves on this memorable occasion sets forth the work of deliverance with such assurance that all that have part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power. And as Jesus is become the first fruits of them that slept, all that sleep in him will God bring with him. Having obtained the victory over death, hell and the grave, whether we view him in our experience as we receive the spirit of adoption, or in the adoption itself, we must, by the faith we have abiding here, look forward to his second coming, and view the graves only opened by his power, as the resurrection and life of his people; for he alone, as Judge of quick and dead, can save them.

"And many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection." In the consideration of this part of the work of our glorious Redeemer we can only speak of him in connection with his people, and as a comfort to them as they feel the effect of his power and grace in the resurrection life, while we tremble at his word, and find by faith in us the application of his glorious truth in experience revealed, as omnipotence goes forth in raising up the dead. I do not consider it a resuscitating or bringing to life something that was dead (as a Lazarus of old), to be viewed by earthly friends who were mourning their demise; for this is the kind of resurrection the world in its wisdom is looking for. They anticipate being free from cares and sickness and death, and expect to know each other. The raising up of Lazarus, and the loosing and letting go, figures forth the power of God in the gospel of his Son, as they who are dead in trespasses and sins are quickened; and only the voice of the Son of God can give them life; and only as they know the gospel's joyful sound are they loosed from the grasp of the law's demands; for Jesus appears in this the end of the law to them as believers. But the raised bodies in connection with his resurrection show that his saints, as they sleep in him, do not see

death, are not dead, but sleeping, when they depart from this world of woe and sin. Hence to depart and be with Christ is far better with them. Therefore, whether called death or sleep, it does not affect their life (which life Christ is) which is hid with Christ in God. Although it is spoken of as a literal matter, it can be understood by the saints only as faith views it in his resurrection life and power as they are walking in the light of his holy countenance; for though the bodies of the saints are sown in weakness, and raised in power; sown corruptible, and raised incorruptible, &c.; yet it is one thing to talk of these mysteries, and another to feel their power in our experience and hope of him; for the saints are daily taught in their knowledge of him the fulfillment of prophecy, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."—Isa. xxvi. 19. Also, "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves."—Ezek. xxvii. 13. Also, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—Daniel xii. 2. These prophecies no doubt have their fulfillment in two senses to show the Lord's work and power in the deliverance of his chosen people from sin, and also from the grave, as taught by our Savior. "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Also, "Verily I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." This evidently was the faith of Martha in regard to her brother, when saying, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." But Jesus says unto her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." This Martha believed, and this Paul preached, saying, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." For "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Those bodies of the saints that arose and came out of the graves, figure forth the belief in the Son of God, showing us that whether living or dead, as it re-

gards the earth in which the saints dwell as believers, neither death, nor life, nor any of the things intervening, can separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus their Lord; for as believers, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness; and to live is Christ, while to die is gain; for then mortality will be swallowed up of life; for dying is but going home. This then the saints feel, as their faith takes hold on their immortal Head, and hope reaches to that within the veil, as the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them, as the sons and daughters of the Lord almighty, who says, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Hence they are all a living people in him, and without him they can do nothing. But as he is in them, they are made patient, or enduring, while passing through the furnace, or trial of their faith. Often I have been asked, "Do you believe we will know each other in heaven?" This savors of the desire of the flesh. How do I know the saints? Only by the fruit they bear, as the same is in possession. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, &c. And whoso loveth is born of God, for God is love. Then as this fruit is borne, as believers we have the witness within, teaching us to know God, which is eternal life. "And this is the record, that God hath given to his eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." Then to live and believe in Jesus is by the power of God; and one can no more know another as a child of God by all the earthly goodness or morality possessed here as men, than he could make the world. Neither can one help believing in Jesus, or loving his afflicted and poor people, when led by his holy Spirit to feel that same life, and seeing these holy fruits developed in the walk and conversation; for if they know God, they know all his people are in him; so there is a vast difference between the fruit of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. The flesh is inquisitive to know what God has not designed for us to know. This is why we are so often found trying to walk by sight, instead of by faith. This is why we so often talk as though we should know all about heaven, as men, when all we do know is or will be in the blessedness of our Redeemer. In all the mystery of godliness we can only see as we receive of his fullness and feel the sublime glory revealed in our salvation from sin and death. Secret things belong to God; to us belong the things that are revealed. Therefore as the just, walking by faith, we may say, "Welcome death, the end of fear." "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

"And went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." No language could be more adequate to show the

power of God, as the one that keeps covenant and mercy. He is the blessed God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed his people with all-spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And now that the Son of man has come, and suffered, and died, and rose again, according as it was written of him, is the appearance of the Son of man in heaven as the first fruits of them that slept. So all the saints, from Abel to the end of time, whether unborn, now living, or having fallen asleep, have their standing in him as the chosen of God, and will be brought forth by his power in their experience of grace, and through all their trials of life, and temptations of the enemy, and through death, into heaven itself, as the children of the resurrection. Hence it is not possible for carnal reason to understand or fathom the mystery of the appearance of these bodies in the holy city, which, I believe, was Jerusalem, the city of David. It affords food for thought to those who are taught of the Lord, as they view him in his perfection, fully able to show the appearance of the bodies of the saints to chosen witnesses, as our Redeemer did show his own body. Yet without the revelation of God's power in the understanding, none even of the dear disciples could know him. Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God. He was of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared the Son of God, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. So those that are Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise. Therefore as no man by searching can find out God, the apostle Paul says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" It is not in the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him, but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things; yea, the deep things of God. So the Lord alone leads his people, and there is no strange God with them. Like Paul, they feel themselves the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints. They are loved, and chastened, tried and brought forth as gold, as he makes them conformable to his death, and to know the power of his resurrection, as I believe our dear, tried sister Mary Parker, and many others, feel while he is bringing them up through great tribulation, to glory alone in the Lord.

Remember, my dear brother, and all the beloved of the Lord, readers of our valuable medium of correspondence, the SIGNS, that nothing is impossible with the Lord. All is of him, in connection with this wonderful display of his divine power.

Righteousness has looked down from heaven, truth has sprung out of the earth, wisdom is justified of her children, and all of them are living by faith, even in the life they now live on earth; and because Jesus lives, they shall live also. Therefore the entrance into the holy city, and appearance unto many, is set forth for the comfort of the Lord's afflicted and poor people, while faith and hope are abiding, giving them assurance of their completeness in him who is the Alpha and Omega, as joint heirs to an inheritance which is incorruptible. If they suffer with him, they shall also be glorified together with him. Thus he must be known in the experience of his saints, as one that is touched with the feeling of their infirmities, in all points tempted, yet without sin, entering into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us poor, sinful men and women of the race of Adam, but born of the Spirit of God, made to hope in his mercy, which endures forever, and having been redeemed from death and endless suffering, and brought in his holy likeness to reign as kings and priests unto God, ever to be with the Lord. When the last vessel of mercy shall awake in his likeness, will that one be fully satisfied. Therefore each one of the saved ones by the blood of the everlasting covenant will be looking for his second coming, when he will come without sin unto salvation. "On wings of faith mount up, my soul, and rise;

View thine inheritance beyond the skies;  
Nor heart can think, nor mortal tongue  
can tell,

What endless pleasures in those mansions  
dwell.  
There our Redeemer lives, all bright and  
glorious;  
O'er sin and death and hell he reigns vic-  
torious."

Though oft, dear brethren, I trust I have felt his quickening power since I was brought to hope in his mercy, twenty-nine years ago, I am still weak and unworthy; yet there are times when I feel strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, and I trust I discover by a living faith Jesus as my worthiness. Therefore I remain a humble follower of him, in hope of a better resurrection.

J. D. HUBBELL.

GHEENT, Ky., May 12, 1887.

MRS. NANNIE B. HALL—Very dear sister in a fond and glorious hope of a blessed immortality beyond these scenes of separation, of sorrow, yea, and of death:—You will please pardon me for talking to you awhile this morning about that rich spiritual feast that we had last Sunday at Elk Lick Church, when brother Durand was presenting to us in power and in the demonstration of the Spirit the unfading beauties and glories of the bride, the Lamb's wife. Solomon was a figure of Christ; and when he said, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away," it was our glorious Lord speaking to his beloved—speaking to that bride which John saw on that great and high mountain, the mountain of God's eternal and un-

changing wisdom, power, love, omnipresence, holiness, immutability and mercy. It was upon that great and high mountain that he beheld her; for the angel said to him, "Come hither, and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." It was that bride to which our brother so delightfully invited our attention; and it was to that great and high mountain to which he referred when declaring to us the eternal, unchanging love of the Father, which centred in the Son; and his bride being one with him, had secured to her that love which caused him to say for her comfort while in her earthly pilgrimage, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." It was upon that great and high mountain that brother Durand by the Spirit's power was beholding her, and by that power was enabled to proclaim to us her unsullied beauties and glories, in her unchanging and eternal unity with her glorious Husband. In the text she is declared to be both his beloved and his fair one. He says again, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." But all that beauty and all that loveliness was because of her eternal unity with her Husband, in which was secured to her and to every member of his body that eternal and immortal life which will be hers throughout eternity, amidst the unfading glories of the fairer world on high. But in the text she is commanded to "Come away;" and the reason for that command is given in these words, "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." She had been through that long and shadowy dispensation housed up under the law; but when she was told to "Come away," it looked to that glorious day when she would be made free from the law and all its requirements; for he was made under that law, to redeem them that were under that law. By faith each member of his body is enabled to rejoice in the glorious truth that when made free by the glorious Son of God they are free indeed. When her Lord said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, all the demands of that law against his bride were fully satisfied. Then he could appropriately say to her, "Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone." But glory to his exalted name, all along through those dark and cloudy days a rift would appear now and then in those clouds of legal power, which would give light to the dear saints, and enable them to rejoice in the fond hope of the near approach of that great and glorious day when the Sun of righteousness would arise with healing in his wings—arise above the clouds and mists of that shadowy dispensation, and shine forth in all his resplendent glory in the gospel heavens. Then surely when he had come, that winter was past, the rains were over and gone. He could then say to her, "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." What

a delightful scenery was that which appeared to the admiring gaze of the bride after being so long housed up, only permitted occasionally to look through the dark shadows of the law, away to that blessed period when the Sun of righteousness would arise in the gospel heavens—arise from the clouds and shadows of that legal dispensation; yes, arise from the darkness of the tomb, and proclaim to you, my dear sister, and to all the redeemed, in holy triumph, "Mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me." Yes, and say to his beloved, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." How beautifully did brother Durand present to us, when preaching at Elk Lick, the great glory of the bride, under the figure of Mount Zion, when he quoted and explained this language of the psalmist, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King." The sun rises in the east, and from his position there in the natural heavens sends his rays all along the northern horizon—all along the sides of the north. So our Lord, as the Sun of righteousness, the great luminary in the gospel heavens, when he arose sent his healing rays, and shone in and upon the redeemed in every land and clime; for the gospel of the grace of God must be preached to all nations. The great beauty and glory of the thoughts suggested by brother Durand in that connection was that the great Sun of righteousness would never set, but would shine on and on amidst all the revolutions of time, till his healing rays would reach the last one of the redeemed, and thus give to them spiritual, eternal and immortal life, and bring them in a way they knew not, and in paths they had not seen, into the superlative glories of his kingdom. Then surely will the glory of the Lord be fully risen upon the bride. But in that long wintry day he only shone through the lattice. The bride said, "Behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice." In that shadowy day he stood behind our wall (the law), and looked forth at the windows. There were two classes of windows through which the bride received light in that dark day—the types and shadows of the law, and the prophets. Having eyes to see, she was enabled to see by the testimony of those two witnesses the rising of the Sun of righteousness in the gospel heavens, when there would be no more need of those windows, no more need of that lattice-work. Yes, she by faith looked on and on through that testimony to that great day, when the Messenger of the covenant would suddenly come to his temple; that day when the proud Pharisee and the vile and wicked persecutor would be stubble; the day that should burn them up, both root and branch; and the day when the Sun of righteousness would arise with healing in his wings, and

shine upon them that feared his name—shine in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Then surely the winter would be past, the rain over and gone, and the flowers appear on the earth; yes, those sweet little flowers of paradise, which are born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. How gloriously did they appear on the earth when he had fully come. Old Simeon, a type of them all (they must all see the salvation of God), said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Yes, and the time of the singing of birds is come. How beautiful and illustrative that figure is, representing all the dear saints. The birds are totally dependent upon God for their clothing and their food. So the dear saints are equally dependent upon their glorious Lord for that robe of righteousness, that robe of which John speaks, saying, "And to her [the bride] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." From the same great source all the saints receive all their spiritual food. To the Elders at Ephesus it was said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." They did not have to furnish that food, no more than brother Durand had to furnish to the dear saints at Elk Lick the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Those treasures were given to him, that he might feed the church of God, which he had purchased with Jesus' blood. Then surely when they had eaten of that rich repast they were filled. They had hungered and thirsted after righteousness, but now they were filled; and being spiritually strengthened, they could with melody in their hearts sing the sweet songs of Zion—sing of the triumphs of Jesus over all their enemies. Then surely the time of the singing of birds had come. O how sweet their songs are, and how lovely those little birds appear. All are clad in the robe of spotless righteousness; all feed on the rich dainties of redeeming and regenerating grace, proclaimed in the everlasting gospel; and all are supplied with a new song, even praises unto our God. Then they were prepared to hear the voice of the turtle in our land. The dove is presented in the Scriptures of eternal truth as a messenger. Noah sent forth a dove to see if the waters were abated off the face of the earth. When he had sent her a second time, she returned in the evening with an olive leaf plucked off. Thus she bore to Noah a message which was evidence to him that the waters of the

flood had abated. The true ministers of the everlasting gospel are messengers, and messengers are angels. It is written, "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand." That angel was the minister of the gospel to that church; and he that holds the seven stars in his right hand reveals to him the true condition of that church; and what was needful for her happiness in her pilgrimage state, and what was against her. Although that church had many things to commend her to the favor of her Lord, yet the Spirit said, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." That messenger gave warning, as well as bore testimony of love. The dove, being a messenger, was a figure of the true minister of the gospel. Its voice was heard in that glorious spring time, when the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. It was heard when John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" and it was heard when Peter on the day of pentecost said, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." It was heard sounding most sweetly when that loving disciple said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." See him in all his infinitely glorious attributes; see him as our risen and ascended Lord, walking in the greatness of his strength; yea, in that glorious immortality which by his resurrection is secured to every member of his beloved, his fair one, to whom he said, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Then how sweet to the dear saints to hear the voice of the turtle in our land; to hear that voice, as we did last Sunday at Elk Lick, proclaiming to us the power, wisdom, goodness, mercy and love of our glorious Lord, made manifest to all the regenerated sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty in the great and wonderful plan of salvation, fixed in infinite wisdom and unchanging love before the dawn of time, and consummated by his advent to earth, when he came clothed in mortality, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. But he came with power to lay his life down, and power to take it again; yea, and filled with that love for his bride which caused him to become poor, that she might be made rich. So poor was he that he said, "The foxes

have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Then surely the saints should love him with pure hearts fervently, having the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost; remembering his wonderful condescension and suffering; all endured for them, that they might enjoy the superlative glories of his kingdom, and live not after the world, but seek and pray that they may be able to obey that new commandment which he gave them, saying, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

May you, my dear sister, and all the dear saints at Elk Lick, be enabled to live in the sweet enjoyment of that commandment; and may our dear brother Durand go forth proclaiming, as he did last Sunday, the beauties and glories of the bride, the Lamb's wife, is my most sincere prayer.

H. COX.

BLANCO, Texas, Nov. 8, 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—All the favored objects of God's everlasting love, whom he foreknew with favor, elected to salvation and happiness, predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, called and justified, he will as certainly glorify with himself in heaven. But as sojourners in this vale, surrounded by various objects of sense, and having the world, the flesh and the devil to impede, and to mar our spiritual vision, we have in this time world but vague and faint views or anticipations of eternal felicity or blessedness beyond the shores of time. Yet as all the heirs of glory had grace given them in their spiritual Head before time, a measure of which is bestowed in time, they are thus enabled to realize and anticipate to some extent the joys of the world to come, and rejoice in hope of the full fruition, having full assurance that when Christ, their life, shall appear, they also shall appear with him in glory. As the saints in their glorified state are put in full possession and enjoyment of eternal life; they then, and not before, apprehend and realize the holiness and consummate happiness in the presence of God, the fullness of all his infinite perfections. To denote the blessedness of the glorified state, the psalmist says, "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."—Psalm xvi. 11. For the grandeur and magnificence of this state it is called a kingdom, a crown of righteousness, a crown of life, and a crown of glory.—1 Tim. iv. 8; 1 Peter v. 4; Rev. ii. 10. As a kingdom, it was perfected for its subjects before the foundation of the world, and is enjoyed by virtue of relationship; and as an inheritance, by testamentary gift. Of this heavenly patrimony the heirs receive some foretaste or an earnest in time, by which they are at intervals enabled to rejoice in hope of enjoying its fullness in eternity.

When the psalmist says, "Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory," his language implies assurance of salvation in time, and ultimate glorification in eternity. By their training here, the Lord leads his people into the experience of the prophet, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jeremiah x. 25. Teaching them their utter dependence upon him here, is preparing them for glory hereafter. As he gives both grace and glory (Psalm lxxxiv. 11), the grace given in time leads to glory in eternity; so all that know the joyful sound of salvation by grace in time, shall be by Christ's righteousness exalted to thrones of glory in eternity.—Psalm lxxxix. 15; Matt. xix. 28. The Lord has been pleased to manifest his glory in an extraordinary manner to some of his servants, by which we have a faint view of the joys of eternity, to which Job bears testimony as follows: "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." "Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."—Job xlii. Though Job, according to God's own testimony, was the most eminent saint then living, yet when he was enabled by divine illumination to behold his Maker in awful majesty and dazzling glory, with emotions of profound reverence, deep humiliation and self-abasement he declared, "I am vile;" "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The prophet Isaiah (vi. 1-4) bears testimony as follows: "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke." The holy prophet, in view of this glorious exhibition of the divine glory, with humble submission makes the following confession: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." When the Lord was transfigured before his disciples, and overshadowed them with the cloud of his glory, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid. The instances named are sufficient to evince the fact that however great and numerous the gifts and graces of saints below, they are not able to bear the eternal weight of glory in reserve for them above. But the Lord is pleased, while he detains his saints here, to exercise them in afflic-

tions and sorrows and alternate seasons of rejoicing, as disciplinary and preparatory to the enjoyment of perfect blessedness with him in glory hereafter. It is evident from both experience and observation that to the extent that God is pleased to manifest his glorious excellencies to his children, and to enlighten their minds to behold them, under a sense of their many imperfections they, as it were, are humbled down in the very depths of contrition before him. In their travels over a boisterous sea, beset with trials without and fears within, they are not left defenseless and alone; but he who united soul and body has prepared for them an invincible escort, providence without and grace within, which will never fail them from the starting-post to the final goal; and when the Father's pleasure is accomplished with them in this world they will ascend from grace to glory. For as he holds the thread that unites soul and body, it cannot be cut until he that tied that knot calls us hence. Then he will receive our souls or spirits to himself in glory, and consign our bodies to their original earth to await their resurrection.

With due deference to those who may differ with me, and, I hope, in the fear of God, I will in a very concise way pen a few thoughts on the subject of the resurrection, the importance of which arises from its being a fundamental principle of the gospel of Christ, and the very foundation of a believer's hope. Knowing that there is difference of opinion among our brethren on this subject, I will try to examine it with that caution suggested in the language of the apostle, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. My reason, unassisted by the word and Spirit of God, would lead me to deny the resurrection of dead human bodies, as this is a material world, and all material bodies are composed of earth; and as thus constituted, in connection with the mind or soul, they are fitly adapted to being and action in the different relations they sustain and the offices they perform; and when their work here is accomplished for which their Creator gave them being, he would remand them back to their original dust, never to be resuscitated, as having no further use for them. This chain of reasoning may, for aught I know, have led good brethren to deny the resurrection of our bodies; but upon this subject we have "a more sure word of prophecy," and to that oracle the most refined reason must give way, to which oracle I now refer the reader. For fear that this article be extended to too great length, my quotations shall be few. The apostle, after directing the attention of his Corinthian brethren to some of the sanctions of his apostleship, says, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the

Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." After referring to the many witnesses of Christ's resurrection, the apostle proceeds, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God." "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."—1 Cor. xv. From the apostle's teaching here we learn that Christ sustained the relation of surety for his bride, and that his death and resurrection were the accomplishment of prophecy, and that his resurrection is the basis of salvation, both as to time and eternity; that as the first fruits of them that slept, his resurrection is both an earnest and prelude to the full harvest, and secures the resurrection of the bodies of all his members. But the question as to how the dead are raised up, and with what body they come, seems to be an unsettled problem among brethren; yet as we are assured that it is raised a spiritual body, and as matter and spirit exhaust the idea of creation, and as there is no mixture nor medium between them, I believe that the body, though sown a natural body, is raised purely, without any admixture, a spiritual body. Flesh and bones, however much purified and refined, would still bear the impress of matter which is corruptible, and corruption does not inherit incorruption. This view seems compatible with both Scripture teaching and God's universal law of adaptation which obtains in all his works; for as rational creatures, in a material world, it was necessary that we should be invested with such powers, physical and mental, as adapt us to our present state in its various relations, with all the model distinctions of features, qualities of heart and mind, together with other marked distinctions, as male and female, with many others, to designate individuals and preserve personal identity; all of which, though absolutely necessary to enable each to fill the circles and perform the offices assigned him by his Creator, when the imprisoned spirit leaves this tenement of clay for the realms of bliss all those distinctions that so aptly apply here fall into disuse, never to be revived. It may be said that as Christ's resurrection was both a pledge and pattern of that of his members, and as he retained original identity, so will they. To this I will remark that as Christ's resurrection is the very foundation of the gospel system and the christian hope, it was necessary that the disciples, who were to bear testimony, should be fully assured that

the same Jesus that was buried had arisen from the dead. As God, therefore, he had power, and did exhibit himself as he was before his death. We must recollect also that in the interval from his resurrection to his ascension he was, with the few exceptions named in the Scriptures, withdrawn or veiled from his disciples, and appeared among them when they were met in a room with closed doors. If all the members of his body in their resurrection life are like Christ, they will necessarily be like each other; and so the Scriptures teach that there is neither bond nor free, Jew nor Greek, male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus. They are as the angels of God in heaven; yet I believe there is a sense (unknown to us) in which saints in glory know each other. The apostle, after referring to the glory of terrestrial and celestial bodies, thus illustrates the subject: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Thus grace, emanating from eternal love, like the leaven hidden in three measures of meal, has accomplished its wonderful work in the complete salvation of the soul, spirit and body, and the happy objects of eternal love have followed the streams to their source, the bosom of God. Thus robed in immortal purity, in union with their departed spirits, throughout the ceaseless annals of eternity they participate in the glories, and in the sweetest melody chant the praises of God, whom they now behold with unclouded vision in the plenitude of his infinite perfections. So grace given below exalts its subjects to thrones of glory in heaven above.

JAMES WAGNER.

CHESTER, Conn., June 2, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I take the liberty to address you. I am not one of your people in name, but I hope I am one that Christ died for, and I desire to be numbered among his people if it is his will and the way be opened for me. I have never heard an Old Baptist sermon preached, but I have read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for two years, and consider it better than any preaching I have ever heard. In fact, I am not satisfied with any preaching that I hear since I have had it to read. I have wanted to be a christian ever since I can remember, and used to pray to God to make me one. I wanted to love to read the Bible, but did not. It seemed very dry indeed to me, and I could not get interested in it. I remember that my grandfather (who is an Old School Baptist) told me that if I would read it through he would give me a new one. I commenced very well, but soon grew tired and gave it up, it was such a task for me. I went to a Presbyterian Sunday School until I was

grown up (my mother was a Presbyterian and my father a Methodist), and was taught that to be a christian I must choose Christ and believe on him; but I could not believe on him. I could believe that he was, and that he had power to save, but I could not believe that he had saved me. I had heard my grandfather talk of predestination and election, and I always loved to hear him talk; but I was taught very different, and of course supposed my teachers were right. But I would often find myself thinking, If God created everything, he must know all about it from beginning to end; and he would know if I was always going to be bad and finally be lost. I wanted to be good very much, as I supposed I must be to be saved. When I was nearly sixteen I commenced going to dancing school. I was very fond of dancing, but did not go very long. One day some one asked me if I had been to the protracted meetings that were being held in the Methodist Church. I had not thought of them before, but that evening I decided to go. There was quite a revival at the time. I saw some of my school-mates rise and tell what the Lord had done for them, and I envied them very much. After meeting was out a lady asked me if I did not want to be a christian. I told her I did. She then asked me to come up to the inquiry meeting the next day. I did not know what an inquiry meeting was, but I went. I thought if there was any way to get religion I must have it, and thought I should have to give up dancing school; but I would give it all up, and all wrong doing and sin, if I only could feel and know that Christ died for me. At the meeting they prayed for me, and I tried as hard as I could to believe. They told me how easy it was to have faith, but it seemed very hard for me. God seemed a great way off. I had no faith to see him, and it seemed as if some dark cloud shut me out from his presence, which I longed for. I went home feeling very gloomy and discouraged; but some time in the night a change came over me. My trouble was all gone, and I believed, because God had given me faith. Now he seemed very near, and I was happier than I had been before in my life. Everything seemed to be changed, and I felt as if I wanted to tell every one; but I know that I had very little to say about it. My mother asked me the next day if I felt any change, and I told her I thought I did. It was always my way to hide my feelings, and it is so yet. I suppose it is because of the foolish pride there is within. I am afraid I have a great deal of it. I loved to read the Bible, not because I understood it (I think I understood very little of it), but it was God's word to his people, and seemed full of love and mercy for poor sinners, and I felt better for reading it. I wanted to join the church and be among God's people; and as I had nearly always, since I can remember, been to the Presbyterians, I joined

there. I was sprinkled at the time, supposing that was as good as any baptism, and felt that I had done my duty; but I still felt that I must do right, or eventually be lost. As it was impossible for me to do right, I was continually getting into trouble and becoming discouraged. After I was married I went away to live; and as there was no Presbyterian Church in the place where we moved to, I joined the Methodists. I could see very little difference between them, and my mind was certainly very much bewildered as to what I believed. In a few years we moved into the place where we now live. Here there is a "close communion" Baptist Church, and no Methodist Church, so I attended the Baptist Church. They immerse only, and do not believe in infant baptism. I had never believed in that, as the command is to "Believe and be baptized;" and I had always supposed that when Christ went down into the water he was immersed. One Sunday when I was there they had communion, and I came away feeling very sad and cast down, to think that I could not be among God's people, as I had always communed with other churches where I had been, and I did not believe in close communion. I supposed that one denomination was as much God's people as another, and I could not understand why they should shut themselves out from the rest. When I saw my grandfather again I asked him why the Old School Baptists were close communionists. (I supposed at the time that the Baptists here were Old School Baptists.) He said it was because all other churches were anti-christ; that they depended on themselves or their works for salvation, instead of on Christ. I knew that was true, as that was what I had always heard preached. My grandfather gave me "Booth's Reign of Grace." I brought it home and read it, and it seemed to me the most glorious doctrine I had ever heard. I felt that it must be true; for what could one of us, poor mortals, ever do to deserve God's favor? But why should he save some and not all? "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." That is the only answer we know. He is good and kind, and we must leave it all with him, knowing that he will do what is right and best. But I was greatly troubled, and feared that I was not one of the chosen; and there was great heart-searching. A greater part of my experience had been darkness, but there were some bright spots that I felt sure were illuminated by the Holy Spirit. In times of trouble he had been my dependence; and now that I was in trouble as to whether I was one of his, these words came to me and made me rejoice, "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." At such times I cannot help thinking of the two who were going to Emmaus, and Christ went with them, and explained the Scriptures to them; and afterward one of

them said, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" I think that I must feel just as they did. I had been to the Baptist Church here but very little, but supposed that they were the Old School, and believed in salvation by grace alone. They were about to take in some new members, and the minister came to talk with my husband and myself about joining. He asked me how I stood. I told him I belonged to the Methodist Church, but believed I was more of a Baptist. I showed him the book I had been reading, the "Reign of Grace." He said he had read it, and that he believed it was truth; and supposing everything to be all right, I was baptized, and became a member of the church. Soon after this my grandfather sent me some copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which explained the Bible so plainly, using such pure language, unmixed with worldliness, and giving God all the glory of man's salvation, that I felt I had never heard the truth preached before. I used to sit day after day reading the SIGNS and comparing it with the Bible. My eyes were opened little by little. I thought of it night and day. I had only been a member a few months, and I felt ashamed to withdraw so soon. I thought they would think I should have known my own mind better when I joined. At first I decided to read the Bible and study it carefully, and see if there was the least excuse for me remaining where I was; but the more I read and studied the more convinced I became that the Old Baptists were right and the others wrong. We were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Such verses as these satisfied me, and I decided to talk with one of the sisters, a woman of fifty, and one esteemed very highly in the church. I told her as nearly as I could how I believed and how I was feeling. She said she believed in election just as much as I did; but she said if she had not believed she would not have been elected. I told her I did not consider that election. I believed that God must first elect or choose us to be heirs of salvation, or we could not believe. She said I ought not to stay away from prayer meetings and communion, for that, she said, we were commanded to assemble ourselves together; but I felt as if it was wrong to go and listen to such teaching. She said she thought I would see in time that we all believed alike. I came home feeling a little better, and thinking that perhaps after all we did believe alike, only had different ways of expressing our belief. But I was not easy long. The same feeling came back, that the church was not giving Christ the honor of salvation, and was not teaching Bible doctrine. Soon after this the minister came to see me.

He said he had heard that I was in trouble, and he was very sorry. I then told him, as well as I could, how I believed, and my reasons for so believing. He quoted a number of verses of Scripture to prove that I was wrong, but which did not prove it at all to my mind. I told him I felt that I ought to leave the church, but he would not consent to that. He said I believed in immersion and close communion, and that was all that was necessary. He said we could not all believe alike, and that I placed too much importance on these things. He said he could not worship such a God as I worshiped, who was not willing to save every one; and he said it was very wicked for me to believe as I did. So he left me, and I felt no better than I did before; but these words kept continually running through my mind, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." After a while others of the church came and talked with me. They all said they believed in election and predestination, but that they had to believe before they were elected. They said that God foresaw who would believe, and then elected and predestinated them to eternal life, but that he did not make any one believe. They said that I was doing wrong in staying away from church, and bringing disgrace on Christ. I told them I had thought of all that, but I could not believe any different. I believe that troubled me more than anything, that the world would see that I was staying away from church and prayer meetings, and it would bring reproach on God's name, which it was my desire to honor. Finally I felt that I could not honor him by disobeying him, so I decided to leave that church at once. I went to the minister and told him that I wanted my name taken off the church book, and asked him if I should have to go before the church and tell them my reasons for leaving. He said he would talk it over with the deacons, and see what could be done. About three months after that I was told that my name had been taken off the church book. I had not had such peace of mind before for some time as I had then. I have never regretted it. If I cannot belong to a church that acknowledges God as its Sovereign, and is governed by Bible teaching; I would rather not belong to any.

I commenced writing this last June, and it is now December. Since June I have heard an Old School Baptist preach for the first time, and it was good preaching, such as I should like to listen to every Sunday, but cannot. I hope to live nearer New York soon, so I can go oftener.

I have written my experience as well as I know how. I felt that I must write it, and you may do as you please with it. I know it is very unworthy a place in your paper. It is the first time I have ever written for publication, and if you do not want to publish it you need not. I shall not be offended, knowing how imperfect it is.

NELLIE H. HALLOCK.

DAVID CITY, Neb., Dec. 17, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER TRUE:—As I am now having a little leisure, I will try to comply with your request to give you a brief history of my religious life.

I became deeply interested upon the subject of religion when about twelve years old; but though I tried hard to cease from sinning, and to merit the favor of God by my prayers and tears, it was to no purpose. I went forward to a Methodist mourners' bench time and again during the two years that followed my deep convictions, and finally joined the church as a seeker, in accordance with the advice of the pastor and leading members; but I was still left to grope my way in utter darkness for two years longer. Finally I gave up all hope or expectation of ever being able to do anything by which to merit salvation, or to secure the favor of a just and holy God, who "cannot look upon sin." Instead of ceasing from sin, I soon found to my sorrow that

"The more I strove against its power,  
I sinned and stumbled but the more."

Finding no relief from my heavy burden, I was driven almost to the brink of despair, and began to cry out in deepest contrition, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But "my extremity was God's opportunity;" and ere long, while sitting all alone, in the autumn of 1844, reading the New Testament, on a beautiful Sunday evening, I reached the fifth chapter of Romans; and when I read these precious words, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," my attention was riveted. I read them over again, and the question arose in my mind, What is meant by the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts? The answer immediately came, It is religion. Then something seemed to ask, How is this love shed abroad in our hearts? The answer came immediately, "By the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Then the question came, Do you love God? I felt that I did; and immediately, even in the twinkling of an eye, my burden was gone, and my poor, sinful heart was filled with a sweet peace "that passeth all understanding."

More than forty-three years have passed away since that beautiful Sunday evening, during which time I have often wandered in forbidden paths, often neglected known duty, and yielded to some besetting sin, by which I lost for a time the joy of God's salvation, the knowledge of my acceptance with him; but even during the darkest period of my life, when such deep, dark, impenetrable gloom took possession of my soul on account of sin and transgression, and I was driven to the brink of despair, and determined more than once to put an end to my miserable existence, because I felt that it was not fit that I should live, I still looked upon that beautiful Sunday evening as the time when God for Christ's sake first

manifested himself to me, a poor, unworthy sinner, as he does not unto the world.

"O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to thee.

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for thy courts above."

Being raised among the Methodists, I knew nothing about any other religious denomination until I was nearly twenty-four years old. At that time I became deeply interested upon the subject of baptism. But though I could find neither precept nor example in the New Testament for sprinkling babes, nor grown persons either, I fought against my convictions nearly four years; but finding it an unequal contest, I at last yielded; and applied for membership in a Missionary Baptist Church. Being received, I was baptized by Elder H. W. Dodge, on the fourth Sunday in July, 1856. At that time I knew nothing about the Old School or Primitive Baptists, except what I had heard from those who were prejudiced against them; and in my ignorance I declared that the doctrine of election, as held and taught by them, was unscriptural. However, in the course of a few years my views underwent a complete change, and then, instead of despising the grand and glorious doctrine of election, I found that I had learned to love it. What caused this change, or when it commenced, I know not; but instead of shaking it off, it grew stronger and stronger, until at last it seemed to take possession of my whole being, and I felt that the Bible would be incomplete without it.

More than twenty-five years have passed since this change in my views was wrought; but the doctrine of election, or salvation by grace, is dearer to me to-day than it ever was before.

In about fifteen months after I joined the Berryville Baptist Church I was licensed to preach, and some years afterward I was ordained.

It now appears strange to me that I should have remained so long with a denomination whose views on the doctrine of election and predestination differed so widely from my own; but I loved that denomination, of which I had been an honored member so long, almost to idolatry, and could not bear the idea of separating myself from her, though I often wished that her ministers would give the doctrine that was so dear to my heart greater prominence in their preaching; and sometimes I deplored what I regarded as unscriptural means, that were frequently put forth during protracted meetings, to induce persons to make a profession of religion. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh

down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. lv. 8-11. Now if the word of the Lord shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he please, should not his ministering servants be satisfied to leave the result with him, after having preached the gospel with all the wisdom and power that God has seen fit to give them? Then why resort to doubtful means, in order to induce people to make a profession of religion?

Though I learned to believe in and to love the doctrine of election, as held and taught by Old School Baptists, I never gave the subject any very careful study till within the last few months, and then I soon became convinced that it was my duty to make my views public, by casting in my lot with those whose views were similar to my own, if I could find an Old School Baptist Church that would be willing to receive such a poor, unworthy sinner as I am into their fold. At that time I did not know that there was an Old School Baptist Church within a hundred miles of me; but a few weeks later I learned that there was one down on Oak Creek, in Butler County. As the Yearly Meeting with Little Flock Church was then in progress, I determined to go down. I reached the place on the morning of the third Sunday in October, 1887. Soon after I entered the house the members of the church, together with some of the visiting brethren and sisters, commenced singing that good old hymn that I used to hear sung in my younger days,

"Brethren, while we sojourn here,  
Fight we must, but should not fear," &c.  
I thought it the sweetest song I had heard for years, especially the last stanzas,

"But of all the foes we meet,  
None so oft mislead our feet,  
None betray us into sin,  
Like the foes that dwell within.

"But let nothing spoil your peace;  
Christ will also conquer these;  
Then the joyful news will come,  
Child, your Father calls, come home."

During the singing of the above hymn you entered the house and took a seat facing the one I was sitting on. I had never seen you before, nor had I the least idea who you were; but as soon as I saw your face I felt drawn to you in a peculiar manner. I was very glad indeed when you followed Elder McKay, for I longed to hear you talk; and I was still more pleased when you stopped at brother Cooper's for dinner, which gave me an opportunity to become acquainted with you. When I went to Oak Creek that day I had no idea of making my views known; but before I had talked with you five minutes you had drawn me out in such a

manner, almost before I knew it, that I felt constrained to tell you all about my change of views; and when you invited me to attend New Hope Church on the second Sunday in November, I determined to do so, if it were possible. My mind had been very dark for several months before I went to Oak Creek that day, and I often felt like singing,

"How tedious and tasteless the hours  
When Jesus no longer I see;  
Sweet prospects, sweet birds, and sweet flowers,  
Have all lost their sweetness to me.

"The midsummer sun shines but dim,  
The fields strive in vain to look gay;  
But when I am happy in him,  
December's as pleasant as May."

These beautiful words expressed the earnest longings of my vile, sinful heart. However, I felt much better after my long talk with you; and before the afternoon services were over the dark clouds had all passed away, and I seemed to be basking in a sea of light, because the good Lord had mercifully restored unto me the joy of his salvation. My heart was so full of joy and peace that I could not sleep any that night until after one o'clock, and I could scarcely keep from praising God aloud. I went to New Hope Church on the Saturday before the second Sunday in November, and was so much pleased with all I saw and heard that I accepted the invitation given for any one who desired to talk with the church. I was accepted, and baptized with three other candidates by yourself the next day; and now I find myself a most unworthy member of that denomination which I once so much despised. To God be all the glory.

May the Lord bless and comfort you in all your work and labor of love, is the prayer of your most unworthy brother,

J. T. SKINNER.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Nov. 8, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—If you think best please publish the experience of brother Fisher. I think that it will be a comfort to many of the dear children of God, especially those that, like him, cannot remember a time when there was such a great change took place with them, as some speak of. How comforting the language of Jesus to such, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." None can fully comprehend their own experience. But there are some things that the saints of God sensibly realize. First, that they are sinners of the deepest dye, or the chief of sinners, without any power to save themselves. Second, that salvation is of the Lord; that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but Jesus. If saved, it must be of grace, and grace alone. Third, that although they have evidence that they are born of God, born of an incorruptible seed, their nature

remains unchanged. They know that in their flesh dwells no good thing, which often makes them cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Fourth, that they love the people of God, desire to be in their society more than any other, love to hear the gospel preached in its purity; and many are now saying, I am so unworthy, so unfit. These are some of the things that none but christians are sensible of. These are marks of grace.

Brethren Beebe, I want to say to you that I heartily indorse your views upon that glorious, soul-comforting doctrine of absolute predestination, or the predestination of all things. I am so glad to find the people of God established in the truth, for it is the eternal truth, as old as God. There would not, could not, anything exist without it. Take it away and you destroy the hope of every heaven-born soul. And although your father, and many others of the fathers in Israel, strongly contended for that glorious truth all their lives, we go back of them for authority—we go to the prophets, to Jesus and his disciples. Yes, we find it from the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, to the last verse of the last chapter of Revelation—all through the Scriptures. The God of heaven will sustain you, and all that proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus. I hope that you will be given strength and wisdom to conduct the SIGNS in the future as you have in the past; and I believe that consistent, genuine Baptists will sustain you in publishing it.

Your sinful brother,

M. VAIL.

AUDRAIN COUNTY, Mo., Oct. 16, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER VAIL:—If you will pardon me, an entire stranger to you in the flesh, for addressing you by letter, I will in my weak way try to gratify a desire that I have had nearly ever since I parted with you at our Association, held with Bear Creek Church, in Marion County, Missouri (Two River Old School Baptist Association). And in doing so, I had thought by the help of God to try and relate some of (as I trust) his dealings with me, a poor sinner. This is a task that I never yet have been able to perform to my entire satisfaction. For sometimes I fear that I may not present my case in its true colors; knowing that the heart of man is deceitful, and above all things desperately wicked. I may yet be deceived, and deceiving others. But if I really know these things, I know that I know them only by revelation; for I firmly believe that the only way that a sinner can know anything about his corrupt nature is by the Spirit of almighty God shining in his heart and making manifest the things that exist there. It is true that he may have a superficial knowledge of these things, and I sometimes fear that it may be this is all

that I know about it; and if it is, then I am deceived and deceiving others. But my prayer is that if I am deceived, may God undeceive me; for I know that he, and he alone, can do this work. But how to begin to tell you what I had started to tell, I hardly know; for I cannot, as some, go back to any particular date when I became seriously concerned about my eternal welfare; but I will go back to the spring of 1870, directly after I joined the "Campbellite Church," which were and had been for some time the people of my choice; for they preached a system of religion which gave me, as I thought, a chance to do something to save myself. But directly after I united with that people, I became more troubled about my condition than I ever had been before. I had always believed that I was a sinner, but not such a great sinner but what I could do something good to please the Almighty. But I now began gradually to find out that I did not possess the power that I thought I did; for I recollect that one day, while alone at work for my father, I was fearful all day of opening my mouth, for fear that I would say something profane; and on that same night there was preaching at the school-house near my father's house. My father, who was an Old School Baptist, went to meeting with me. The preacher that preached was the one that had immersed me. He took for a text, "For by grace are ye saved," &c. This was the first sermon that I had ever heard him preach but what I was thoroughly satisfied with; but while he was preaching there was a very small something within me that told me that his preaching was not right; but I was determined to crush that down, for I intended to believe that it was right. My father, next morning, asked me if I believed what my preacher said last night, and I told him that I did. This was the last time that he said anything upon the subject for several weeks, and during this time I was in my deepest distress. I now felt like one all alone. I knew not what it was that produced such great distress of mind. I sometimes thought it might be because I had joined the church and become a christian. But I went on trying to extricate myself, sometimes trying to get relief by prayer in some secret place; but it was often the case that if I was able to utter a word at all, it did not seem to rise higher than my head. My Testament, which I carried in my pocket, I would sometimes try to get relief from by reading it, and I read it all the spare time I could get. But often I would open it at a passage of Scripture that would seem to condemn me; then I would close it, and put it back into my pocket. Sometimes I would try to get relief by going into mirthful company, but would only get temporary relief, if any relief at all. I felt that the brute creation were in a better condition

than I, for when they passed away that was the last of them; but when I should pass away from this world, I had a soul that would last through the endless ages of eternity. I could not see how God could save such a sinner as I now felt myself to be. After I had tried all my power, all my good works that I had been resting upon, and they had all failed me in my time of great need, I had to give up all for lost, and had to pass sentence upon myself, that if God banished me from his presence forever it was just. But my prayer was, "God, be merciful," although I could not yet see how he could extend mercy; for he could not, at the expense of justice, do so. I now viewed him as a just and holy God, one that could not behold iniquity, or look upon sin with any degree of allowance. I viewed him as I never had before. Also, I viewed myself in an altogether different light. Heretofore I had thought that although I knew I did some things that I ought not to do, yet I could do some good things to counterbalance the evil, and thereby, as it were, bring God under obligations to save me. But O how different now! I felt myself a poor, hell-deserving sinner, entirely dependent upon him, an independent God. But I felt that if he did banish me, O that I might be kept from sinning against such a holy Being. But in his own good time, after leading me out of self, I humbly trust, he led me to the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world, and gave me a comfortable hope in the righteousness of his dear Son. I say a comfortable hope; and indeed it is a comfortable hope. Although sometimes it looks very small to me, yet I would not take ten thousand worlds like this for it, for it is all the hope I have. I know that if I am saved it is by grace, free and unmerited.

For fear of wearying you with this scribble, I will close. Yours in hope,  
MARTIN D. FISHER.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF  
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

A WHITE STONE AND A NEW NAME WRITTEN.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."—Rev. ii. 17.

In compliance with a request from a trembling pilgrim and reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, we present such thoughts as are given us on this portion of the revealed testimony of Jesus. The text has been repeatedly spoken of and treated as a subject for elucidation both editorially and by able correspondents; therefore we should not now refer to it but in deference to the wish of others. As no one will claim to have said all that can be said on this subject, there is room for further consideration of its important truth in its application to the experience of the afflicted and poor people whom God has called to be saints. When called upon by any honest seeker after truth, we dare not withhold such views as are afforded us in regard to any portion of the Scriptures of divine truth. Yet we wish it ever to be remembered by all who read or hear such expressions from us, that instead of wishing our sentiments to be accepted as the standard of truth, we ask none to receive what we present until satisfied for themselves that it is entirely according to the Scriptures. When any sentiment is thus sustained it must be truth, no matter by whom it is advanced.

The first point which must be observed in the consideration of the subject to which our attention is called is the strict limitation of the command in this verse. It is not the appeal of a helpless suppliant calling upon any one who may be kind enough to attend to his cry, but it is the almighty word of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand. By his authority each of these seven messages is written unto the angel of the church addressed. Evidently, it is doing violence to the inspired text to apply them to any other character besides those to whom they are addressed by their divine Author. In each of these letters the peculiar case of the church to whose angel it was written is described; the message is not applicable to any other character. So far from the words of this text being addressed to the world of the sinful race of Adam, they do not include all of them who are subjects of that salvation which is in Christ Jesus. When any of them are so overcome by their carnal mind that they have turned to the fables of natural reason, they have not an ear in the sense specified in

the text. Such cannot hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; their ears are turned away from all such divine truth. Neither such as "hold the doctrine of Balaam," nor such as "hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes," which thing the Lord hates, can be included among those who hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. The church at Pergamos had both these characters. Hence this command did not include all of them who were held as belonging to that church. Many times in the experience of the saints they are called to realize that they do not then have an ear, and consequently what the Spirit saith unto the churches does not come to them at such times. They may feel that such sayings are indeed precious to those who can hear them, but to them the word is sealed that they cannot receive it. It was to them who were "beloved of God, called to be saints," that Paul wrote, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." The dear saints at Rome, to whom this was written, were not left to the choice of their own natural mind whether they would forfeit that life which is hid with Christ in God by living after the flesh; but it was true of them, as of all the saints everywhere, that they must eat the fruit of their own disobedience when they would depart from the holy commandment of the Lord. So it is written to the churches of Galatia, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." While it is thus evident that not even all subjects of grace are included in the specific address of our text, it is far more evident that none of those who are dead in sin can be here directed or exhorted to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. And since they to whom the Spirit speaks are already in possession of eternal life, and can never perish, it cannot be correctly understood that the gift of that life depends upon their giving heed to the admonition contained in this or any other message from the Lord to them. It must be therefore in some other sense that they reap life everlasting. To our mind it is clear that the fruit of the Spirit is that which is reaped by those saints who sow to the Spirit. That fruit is definitely specified by the apostle, and is contrasted with the works of the flesh, which lusteth against the Spirit. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love,

goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law."—Gal. v. 19-23. No one who is led by the Spirit can hesitate to choose the fruit of the Spirit as here stated in preference to the abominable works of the flesh; yet there is need of every admonition and exhortation given for the direction of those who are by grace called to walk as children of light. The saints can never have the answer of a good conscience toward God while walking in disobedience to his commandments; therefore it is only in obedience that they experimentally inherit the kingdom of God, which is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."—Romans xiv. 17. So it is for their joy and comfort here in their temporal experience that they "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." None but such as have an ear can hear this sacred word. So our Lord said to the Jews, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word."—John viii. 43. They heard the literal words which he spoke, and sought to stone him for them; but they had not an ear to hear the word of eternal life. That word is spoken by the Spirit exclusively to the churches.

"To him that overcometh." Who could hope for the fulfillment of the gracious promise of our text if the condition were that in their own strength they must overcome the enmity of sin even in themselves? Such an understanding of the subject would destroy the hope of every conscious sinner. The salvation of God is revealed to those who are without strength, and consequently utterly unable to overcome. But to the followers of Jesus there is a perpetual warfare while they remain in the body of this death. In this strife they who walk in the Spirit do overcome all opposition. While they must encounter the wiles of the tempter, the allurements of the world, and the weakness of the flesh, they overcome all "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." This victory is attained only by those who are made able by grace to "love not their lives even unto death."—Rev. xii. 11. All such victors must ascribe their triumph exclusively to their conquering Leader. His grace alone can make a helpless worm able to thresh the mountains. So even the apostle was dependent upon God for the victory, which was given to him with all saints through our Lord Jesus Christ. By the strength which is given them in Christ Jesus all the saints do overcome in the final victory over sin and death; but there is a sense in which they are sometimes overcome of evil. In that condition they cannot receive the gift which is bestowed upon him that overcometh. Indeed, it is inseparably connected with the conflict; so that without the experience of the warfare there is no such thing as receiving the gift. Even they who are secured in the salvation of God are still unable to overcome the

enemies which beset them in their daily trials, except as they receive that victory through the grace of the Captain of their salvation. It is not the privilege of any of the soldiers of the cross to continue long in this land of enemies without realizing something of the conflict to which they are called; but they are never able to anticipate the particular form in which they are to be attacked. Just in the point where they feel most secure they are likely to find their greatest weakness. So Paul could testify, "When I am weak, then am I strong."—2 Cor. xii. 10.

"Will I give to eat of the hidden manna." The reference here is evidently to that manna which was by the command of the Lord preserved in the golden pot, and hidden in the ark of the testimony. That manna was preserved for a testimony to the children of Israel throughout their generations. In the antitype this represents the assured evidence which sustains the hope of the saints in their weary pilgrimage through this barren land, in which they find nothing but opposition and terror. Now, to these strangers and pilgrims wearisome nights are appointed, in which they often hunger for some evidence of the love of God to them; on the ears of such this promise falls with peculiar comfort. To eat of this hidden manna is to derive strength and nourishment from the wonderful display of divine favor to his people in time past, and especially to feel that in all the goodness thus exhibited his grace has given us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. When walking in the Spirit there is nothing which can be compared to the sweetness of that comforting assurance. No one ever did receive this food without realizing that it was given by that glorious One who dictated this message to the angel of the church in Pergamos. It is not the result of careful investigation and earnest study; but it always comes as the gift of God through our dear Redeemer. Its efficacy in giving strength to the weak and fainting soul is so wonderful that it cannot be compared to anything known to nature. It is food and medicine, rest and clothing, all combined; and in its soothing and blissful application to the weary soul temptation, conflicts, doubts and fears are all banished from the sacred presence of the revealed Savior. In this sweet experience of the Savior's love and present care for them the saints have a blissful anticipation of that perfect enjoyment which is the heritage of all them that love God. Thus they are given to eat of that hidden manna of the sure testimony of the everlasting love and faithfulness of God, which remains as the perpetual witness that they are the subjects of his rich and matchless grace. It is important to observe that this is not offered, but given, to the favored ones designated.

"And I will give him a white stone." In the figure here used reference is

clearly made to the ancient custom of signifying the judgment of the tribunal before which a prisoner was tried, by giving him a black stone in token of condemnation, or a white stone in token of acquittal. This verdict was of course important in proportion to the authority by whom it was rendered. In our text it is of the highest importance, since there can be no higher tribunal than the supreme judgment of the Lord of all, who is the Judge of quick and dead. It will be observed that in the symbolic language of the Scriptures innocence and purity are signified by the use of the spotless white, which is descriptive of the immaculate throne of the Holy One, who is himself the embodiment of all perfection. So, in following humbly in obedience to the sovereign command of our Lord in the ordinance of baptism, it is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God." The righteousness of saints is signified by "fine linen, clean and white;" and all the armies in heaven are clothed in that spotless raiment.—See Rev. xix. 8, 14. On the other hand, to the subjects of divine condemnation "is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."—Jude 13. In this precious promise the saints have continual cause for rejoicing, for they have not to depend upon the written word alone for its assuring truth; they know by experience that it is spoken to them in their individual trials, and in every act of obedience wrought by that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit in them. The "white stone" given to them thus individually in every act of obedience to their Lord, is that inexpressible sense of divine acceptance which is felt in following him.

"And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." This peculiar specification distinguishes this stone from all others. The name written in it is not the old name of righteousness attained by observance of legal precepts, but an entirely new principle is expressed in the "white stone" of that righteousness of God in which all his saints are justified freely by his grace. This new name does not need to be carefully concealed from the curious search of those to whom it is not given. It is hidden by the express purpose of God, and neither eye nor thought can ever discover it. They to whom this white stone is given alone can see the glorious name that is written therein. This is true of all the subjects of his saving mercy and grace. But the manifestation of the divine approval in their actual fulfillment of the commandments of their Lord is received only in keeping his commandments. This is the "great reward" of which David sings in the nineteenth Psalm. No servile compliance with mere forms of legal requirements can ever receive the reward of this approval of divine justice. It is the peculiar favor of God to his chosen people which gives

them this full justification in Christ Jesus. To them there is no condemnation so long as they walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. In the gift of this white stone of divine approval of their walking in the ordinances of the Lord, the saints receive the personal manifestation of the Spirit of Christ leading them in the right way of the Lord. This is of infinitely more importance and value to them than all the wealth and honors of this transitory world. The new name is already written in this white stone. It is never given without the new name, for it is only through the power of that name that they are able to overcome in the warfare to which they are called. The new name is the name of the Lord, who is of God made unto all his saints wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. All his saints are named in that name. It is that "good name" which is rather to be chosen than great riches.—Prov. xxii. 1. It is the name of the Lord, which is a strong tower, into which the righteous runneth, and is safe. In that name they are not subject to the law of sin and death, nor are they judged by that law. They are under law to none but Christ. Their allegiance to him is a matter of personal revelation, which cannot be judged by any other tribunal but his own eternal truth. So it is written, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."—1 Cor. ii. 15. In the fact that no man knoweth this new name saving he that receiveth it, is shown the impossibility of this divine approval being communicated even by one saint to another. The Lord alone judges his people individually, and that judgment is not known to any but the saint with whom the judgment is held. Others who have the same experience can judge the manifestation of that work in the walk and conversation of the one in whom it is wrought; but it is really known only to him who has personally received the divine approval in the white stone and new name which he alone can positively know that he has received.

**SPECIAL OFFER.**

PARTIALLY to repay our subscribers for their time and trouble, in procuring for us new subscribers, we will from now until April first, 1888, make the following offer in

**CASH PREMIUMS.**

To any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

We have received a good many new subscribers since these terms were first published, and we hope the brethren who indorse the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS will feel a personal interest in aiding in the increase of its circulation.

These terms, brethren, are really below what we can afford; but if by this means we shall double our subscription list, and by a little effort on the part of our subscribers it can be done, we will then lower our subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents per year, and run the single sheet of eight pages weekly. Let each subscriber see what he can do.

**READ CAREFULLY.**

WE would request that our brethren read carefully the resolution passed by the Warwick and Middletown Churches, December 31st, 1887, and published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for January 15th, 1888, on page 22. It has been stated that the above churches have declared non-fellowship for all who do not believe the doctrine of God's predestination of all things. If our brethren will read the resolution carefully, they will see that this is not correct. The churches expressly declare that they "can in love receive those who are weak in the faith." It is one thing to express a lack of a full understanding of this or any other principle of the truth of God, and quite another thing to dispute and ridicule it. There are some churches among our order of Baptists that practice the order of feet-washing in a literal sense, while others do not; yet this is no bar to fellowship. But suppose we were to admit an article into the SIGNS ridiculing this ordinance; would it not break fellowship with those who hold this ordinance as sacred perhaps as they do the Lord's supper?

The Warwick and the Middletown & Walkill Churches have always held the doctrine of God's predestination of all things as a precious truth, and the SIGNS has contended for it from its first number; but it has never been required that any should confess a full understanding or a conviction of its truth to be admitted into our fellowship; but we cannot fellowship ridiculing or railing against the doctrine.

Brethren, be not deceived.

**MARRIAGES.**

On December 27, 1887, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. John H. Totten, of Hopewell, and Miss Jane L. Rudebock, of Raritan, both of N. J.

JAN. 11, 1888, at the residence of the bride's parents, near Delmar, Del., by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Mr. James R. Layfield, of Wicomico Co., Md., and Miss Phebe Jane, daughter of C. W. Hastings, of Sussex Co., Del.

**ORDINATIONS.**

THE North Cedar Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, in Marion Co., Iowa, at her regular meeting on Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1887, called for the ordination of brother JOHN T. BIXLER to the full work of the gospel ministry, and agreed to present him to the Elders present, viz: A. Wood, of Ebenezer Church, Mahaska County, Iowa; J. J. Rowland, of Des Moines Church, Wapello County, Iowa; S. F. Cayce, of Greenfield, Tenn.; Deacons T. Clark, of Little Flock Church, Marion County, Iowa, and T. Bridges, of North Cedar Church, Marion County, Iowa; and all the brethren present.

At the above request of the church, the Elders and brethren organized by choosing Elder A. Wood Moderator, and Elder S. F. Cayce Clerk.

Brother Bixler gave a reason of his hope, and also his impressions to exercise in public, after which the council retired for consultation, and on motion and second agreed to proceed to the ordination.

It being late in the day, the council decided to adjourn until to-morrow morning at half-past eight o'clock.

On Sunday morning the council convened, and proceeded to the ordination in the following order:

Prayer by Elder S. F. Cayce, with laying on of hands of the presbytery.

Charge by Elder A. Wood.

Right hand of fellowship by Elder A. Wood, and by all the brethren and sisters present.

A. WOOD, Mod.  
S. F. CAYCE, Clerk.

Now, dear brethren, I wish to say that as soon as the above ordination was attended to, the congregation repaired to the water, where two young sisters were buried in baptism by Elder Wood. Much good feeling seemed to prevail among the brethren and sisters present. This makes six added to our little church the past summer and fall, by experience and baptism. May the good Lord be praised, for his goodness and mercy endure forever.

T. BRIDGES.

ATTICA, Marion Co., Iowa.

**CHURCHES CONSTITUTED.**

PURSUANT to a call of brethren who had previously been dismissed from Zion Church, of Washington, D. C., for that purpose, a council was held at their place of meeting near Centerville, Fairfax Co., Va., Tuesday, Dec. 6, 1887, for the purpose of examining the faith and considering the propriety of the recognition of said brethren as a church.

The council was composed of brethren from Bethlehem, Quantico, Occoquan, Alexandria, Zion and Hepzibah churches, and was organized by appointing Elder J. N. Badger Moderator, and Elder Wm. M. Smoot Clerk.

The members presented to the council their letters of dismissal from Zion Church, which were found to be in regular form, and satisfactory to the council. Their Articles of Faith and Order were examined, and found to be sound and consistent with the doctrine and order of the gospel.

The council being satisfied with the necessity of such constitution, proceeded to recognize them as a church of gospel truth, they having previously selected ANTIOCH as the name by which they are to be designated.

The right hand of fellowship was extended to them by Elder Smoot, after which Elder Badger preached an interesting, instructive and comforting sermon.

J. N. BADGER, Mod.  
Wm. M. SMOOT, Clerk.

**OBITUARY NOTICES.**

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERN:—It is with sorrow that I send you for publication the death of Elder Uriah Trumbo, who died at his residence in the town of Rimer, Putnam Co., Ohio, Jan. 2, 1888, of lung and stomach disease, aged forty-six years, ten months and twenty-seven days.

The deceased was born in Richland County, Ohio, Feb. 5, 1841, and moved with his parents to Noble County, Ind., in the year 1851, and removed to Putnam County, Ohio, in April, 1883.

The subject of this notice received a hope in Christ, and was baptized by Elder Z. Thomas, in the fellowship of Mt. Salem Church, Noble Co., Ind., April 15, 1866. Becoming dissatisfied with the doctrine and order of that church, on Nov. 20, 1875, he was baptized by Elder George Weaver, in the fellowship of the Predestinarian Baptists, and was organized with others into a church called Sardis, on the first Saturday in January, 1876. In November, 1878, he was received into the Oliver Church, Wood Co., Ohio, and that church licensed him to preach in February, 1879. At the Mad River Association, in September following, he was ordained to the full ministry of the gospel. In April, 1883, he removed to Putnam County, Ohio. In July, 1884, he was received into the fellowship of the Sugar Creek Church, Putnam Co., Ohio, where he remained up to his death.

His experience appears doubly interesting to me now, which can be found in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, Vol. 36, No. 15, and Vol. 55, No. 13.

Elder Trumbo leaves a wife and four children (two sons and two daughters), a mother, one brother, two sisters, besides a large circle of friends, to mourn their loss. He was a loving and affectionate husband, a kind and indulgent father, and highly esteemed by all who knew him. We sympathize deeply with the family and friends. The loss to the family and church is irreparable; but we are confident that our loss is his eternal gain. He selected the text to be used on the funeral occasion (2 Tim. iv. 7), and requested Elder A. B. Brees and the writer to officiate, which we did, in the presence of a large and attentive audience, on the 4th inst., and his remains were laid away to await the glorious summons.

Elder Trumbo was an able defender of the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. He appreciated the SIGNS OF THE TIMES very highly.

Yours in hope,

J. G. FORD

RUSHMORE, Ohio.

ELDER Uriah Trumbo selected for his funeral text 2 Tim. iv. 6, 7, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

**RESPONSE OF A COMRADE STILL IN ARMS.**

Thou hast faithfully served in the battle,  
In the cause of that faith that sustained thee;  
'Midst the strife, and the smoke, and the rattle  
Of the war to which Jesus ordained thee.

With a zeal and a love pure and holy,  
And void of all fear or emotion;  
With a valor unmingled with folly  
'Midst the scenes of the fiercest commotion.

Dear brother, with laurels and graces,  
'Twas the hand of thy Captain that crowned thee;  
And meekly our chorus of praises  
We will join to that God that renowned thee.

For the gifts of his grace and his keeping,  
Thy praise and thy labors were given;  
And all things (rejoicing or weeping)  
Thou didst prize as the bounty of heaven.

O may my sad heart, as it lingers  
Still here in earth's battles and terrors,  
As thine was, by God's loving fingers,  
Be guided and shielded from errors.

And when the fierce battle is ended,  
And I my discharge shall be given,  
As in earth, may our worship be blended  
In that choral reunion of heaven.

A. B. BREES.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—  
With a sorrowful heart I try to write for publication the obituary of our highly esteemed brother, **J. R. Copeland**, who died at his old residence in Overton County, Tennessee, September 28, 1887. He was born November 10, 1806, was married to Sarah, daughter of Abram Hayter, Jan. 3, 1833, and they lived a happy life together for many years, being very much attached to each other. They raised ten children. Brother Copeland united with Roaring Church of Old School Baptists, Overton County, Tenn., fifty years ago. His seat was never vacant at their meetings when it was in his power to attend. His house was always open to welcome all who were in good standing, and his wife always tried to make every one happy. The people of his county chose him more than once to serve them in the halls of the state, and he held various offices of public trust. The people felt that the interests of the country were ever safe in his honest hands. He was a Commissary in the Mexican war, and a Captain in the late war. He was a friend to the widow and orphan, and the poor and distressed he never turned empty away. He has been very feeble for several years, suffering with liver disease and shortness of breath, and was confined to his bed some two months. He said it would be a happy exchange for him to depart, but said he was willing to wait the Lord's time. He said it was right for him to suffer. I thought he had more patience than any sick person I ever saw. He was in his right mind until the last, and passed away as easy as though falling asleep.

May the Lord sustain and comfort us in our great sorrow, is my prayer.

Your unworthy brother, if one at all,  
V. VAUGHN.

SISTER **Ama Day** was born in St. Clair Co., Ill., Oct. 4, 1796. Her maiden name was Enochs. She was married April 24, 1814, to Levi Day, and to them were born ten children, five boys and five girls. Old brother Day, her husband, died June 11, 1854. In the year 1842 sister Day received a hope in Christ, and united with the Free Will Baptists, but soon became dissatisfied, and united with the Little Flock Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists at Scales Mound, Ill., and was baptized by Elder Wm. Long. From that time until her death she lived a worthy member, always filling her seat in the church, and was beloved by all. She died at the home of her son-in-law, Jasper Stonebraker, in Hampton, Iowa. The old sister died Dec. 12, 1886, in full faith of a blessed immortality beyond the grave, and said she wanted the writer of this to preach her funeral at the Providence Church, in northwestern Illinois.

On the second Sunday in April, 1887, in company with Elder Gillett, I tried to preach a discourse to her memory, from 1 Cor. xv. 3. She leaves five daughters, one son and a large number of grandchildren to mourn her death; but we do not mourn as those without hope. We believe that old brother and sister Day are enjoying the blessed privilege of sitting around the throne of God.

BENJAMIN SALLEE.

WARREN, ILL., Jan. 12, 1888.

My dear husband, **Charles Wesley Blocker**, died at his home in Leake County, Miss., Dec. 22, 1886. He was born in Copiah County, Miss., May 2, 1828. He joined the Baptists of the Primitive faith and order in 1880, was chosen deacon of Zion Hill Church soon after he became a member, which office he filled with credit to himself and the satisfaction of the church. He had not enjoyed good health for several years, though he worked on his farm. He was taken sick on Friday morning with pneumonia, and on Tuesday morning asked me to send for Elder J. S. McCauley, our beloved pastor. When brother McCauley came on Tuesday night the fever was so high that he did not say anything in particular. On Tuesday evening I asked him if he felt able to talk. He said he could if he had the gift, and said if it was God's will to take him he was reconciled. He was sick six days. So sudden was his sickness and so unexpected his death, we were not ready to give him up. But God saw fit to call him home, and O how we miss him. We bow in humble submission and desire to be reconciled to God's will.

NANCY L. BLOCKER.

EDINBURGH, MISS.

My uncle, **Jacob Humphrey**, died at his home, near London Tract meeting-house, Chester County, Pa., Jan. 15, 1888, aged seventy-seven years and fourteen days. He was a great sufferer, but very patient. I feel that it was gain for him to die.

Your sister in hope,

M. L. WHITE.

KIMBLESVILLE, Pa.

## RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

D G McCowen 2 50, Mrs Mary B Dudley 2 50, W H Holly 2, Eld T J Head 2, J D Barnes 4, Dr T Bass 2, Geo W Johnson 2, Eld S H Durand 2 50, Jephtha Clawson 2, T C Callan 2, J T Copeland 2, J B Blackford 2 50, Eld E Rittenhouse 5, Wm Slade 15 50, W Florence 2, D H Onell 4, Ellen Hitchcock 2, P J Woodson 2, H A Hartsfield 2 50, S S Mullins 2, John Hedgpeh 2, Gid Graham 2 50, Henry Killgore 2, Mrs A E Hunter 2 50, Mrs Sue Lawler 2, Eld A W Patterson 15, John P Chapman 2.—Total \$91 00.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1888. NO. 4.

## POETRY.

### CHARITY.

THOUGH I possessed ten thousand worlds,  
And sacrificed the same;  
Though I should speak ten thousand  
words  
In honor of his name;  
Had I a thousand tongues to tell  
The wonders of his grace;  
Could I the angels' anthems swell,  
In heaven, his glorious praise;  
Could I by faith the mountains move;  
With joy my hopes explain;  
And have within no christian love,  
My hopes are all in vain.  
Yea, though I should my body yield  
To be consumed by flames,  
And have no love to me revealed,  
No profit do I gain.  
Great God, behold my heart, and see  
If love I've ever known,  
Or if my efforts to serve thee  
From vanity have grown.  
O could I know the Savior's love  
Was e'er to me revealed,  
No foes Satanic then could move,  
For love would be my shield.

H. B. J.

GLENWOOD, Texas, Aug. 8, 1885.

### EXODUS XII. 42.

"It is a night to be much observed  
unto the Lord for bringing them out from  
the land of Egypt: this is that night of  
the Lord to be observed of all the chil-  
dren of Israel in their generations."

It is a night that was observed,  
The joyous theme of every soul,  
Of all that host whom God preserved  
From Egypt's curse and dire control.

A night more lasting than the hills,  
To all who are of Israel's throng;  
And the oppressed of earth it fills  
With hope that God will right their  
wrong.

God had foretold that awful night,  
The doom that should on Egypt come,  
For the oppression and the slight  
They heaped upon his chosen ones.

That night had come; in Egypt stood  
Israel, leaning on their Lord;  
Helpless and bowed that brotherhood,  
Surveyed no hope but his own word.

Clasping the lamb of sacrifice,  
Arrayed as God had given command,  
Ready he stood with his supplies  
To go forth by his guiding hand.

'Twas midnight: through the shadowy  
gloom  
Death all his promised victims sought;  
Israel was saved from his dread doom,  
By crimson sign their Savior wrought.

Bowed to the earth their oppressors came,  
Wildly in haste bade them begone;  
Compelled to own the Lord's just claim,  
Before the early morning dawn.

Morn on the hills more beauteous broke  
To Israel from shackles freed;  
Saved by their Lord from Pharaoh's yoke,  
In their severest hour of need.

A night is here and passing now;  
Earth's night, which o'er the saints doth  
lay;  
Soon it shall pass from off their brow,  
When Christ shall come with lasting  
day.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

GHEENT, Ky., Nov. 25, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR  
BRETHREN:—The psalmist says,  
"For in the hand of the Lord there  
is a cup, and the wine is red; it is  
full of mixture; and he poureth out  
of the same: but the dregs thereof,  
all the wicked of the earth shall  
wring them out, and drink them."—  
Psalm lxxv. 8.

I am in receipt of a letter from  
Elder Lee Hancks, of Ozark, Ala-  
bama, asking me to write for publi-  
cation in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES  
some thoughts on this language of  
the psalmist. In verses four to seven  
of this Psalm we find this language,  
"I said unto the fools, Deal not fool-  
ishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up  
the horn: lift not up your horn on  
high: speak not with a stiff neck.  
For promotion cometh neither from  
the east, nor from the west, nor from  
the south. But God is the judge:  
he putteth down one, and setteth up  
another." In the tenth verse he says,  
"All the horns of the wicked also  
will I cut off; but the horns of the  
righteous shall be exalted." It is  
evident from a careful reading of  
this Psalm that the psalmist had a  
view of the indignation of the Lord  
against the wicked, and the exalta-  
tion of the righteous. Surely the  
cup in the hand of the Lord is the  
cup of his indignation; for the wine  
is red, and it is full of mixture—full  
of the mixture of the wrath of God  
against the unrighteous. "And he  
poureth out of the same." In con-  
firmation of that language the psalm-  
ist says, "Upon the wicked he shall  
rain snares, fire and brimstone, and  
a horrible tempest. This shall be  
the portion of their cup." The Lord  
by his servant, the prophet Ezekiel,  
says, "Therefore have I poured out  
mine indignation upon them: I have  
consumed them with the fire of my  
mouth: their own way have I recom-  
pensed, saith the Lord God." The  
Lord by the prophet here says,  
"Therefore have I poured out mine  
indignation upon them." This lan-  
guage, being in the past tense, pre-  
sents that which has already been  
accomplished. It presents the fear-  
ful punishment that had been sent  
upon men on account of their wicked-  
ness. It is written, "And God saw  
that the wickedness of man was great  
in the earth, and that every imagina-  
tion of the thoughts of his heart was  
only evil continually." "And the  
Lord said, I will destroy man whom  
I have created from the face of the  
earth." Here is presented the wick-

edness of men before the flood, and  
the fearful wrath of God poured out  
upon them because of that wicked-  
ness. Of the vast multitude that  
then peopled the earth none were  
exempt from utter overthrow and  
destruction, save Noah and his house-  
hold; and the cities of the plain suf-  
fered in like manner. None were  
saved from the fearful retribution  
visited upon the wicked cities of  
Sodom and Gomorrah, save righteous  
Lot and his family. Then surely the  
cup of God's indignation against the  
wicked was poured out upon the  
antediluvians, and upon the inhabit-  
ants of the wicked cities of the plain.  
Pharaoh committed great wickedness  
in oppressing God's people, and in  
refusing to let them go. God's in-  
dignation against the wicked was  
manifested in the plagues sent upon  
Egypt, and the utter overthrow of  
Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.  
While the children of Israel were in  
the wilderness, Korah, Dathan and  
Abiram rebelled against Moses, and  
in that rebellion committed great  
wickedness; and for that rebellion  
the earth opened and swallowed up  
them and their hosts. It was thus  
that the cup of God's wrath was  
poured out upon the wicked and re-  
bellious among his own chosen people.

The prophet Daniel said of king  
Nebuchadnezzar that when his heart  
was lifted up, and his mind hardened  
in pride, he was deposed from his  
kingly throne; and they took his  
glory from him, and he was driven  
from the sons of men; and his heart  
was made like the beasts, and his  
dwelling was with the wild asses.  
They fed him with grass like oxen,  
and his body was wet with the dew  
of heaven, till he knew that the most  
high God ruled in the kingdoms of  
men. It was thus that the wrath of  
God was poured out upon this proud  
and wicked monarch. He was de-  
posed from his kingly throne, was  
driven from the society of men, and  
made to eat grass like an ox. But  
his son Belshazzar was even more  
wicked than his father. The prophet  
said to him, Thou "hast lifted up  
thyself against the Lord of heaven;  
and they have brought the vessels of  
his house before thee, and thou and  
thy lords, thy wives and thy concu-  
bines, have drunk wine in them; and  
thou hast praised the gods of silver,  
and gold, of brass, iron, wood and  
stone, which see not, nor hear, nor  
know: and the God in whose hand  
thy breath is, and whose are all thy  
ways, hast thou not glorified." It is  
also written, "In that night was  
Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans

slain." Surely the cup of God's  
wrath was poured out upon that  
wicked and idolatrous king. The  
children of Israel, for their idolatry  
and disobedience to the laws of God,  
were taken into Babylon, and while  
there in captivity were made to  
mourn, and hang their harps on the  
willows. The psalmist says of them,  
"By the rivers of Babylon, there we  
sat down, yea, we wept, when we re-  
membered Zion." Thus in captivity  
they wept, and said, "How shall we  
sing the Lord's song in a strange  
land?" It was thus that the Lord  
poured out his wrath and indignation  
upon his chosen people, because of  
their iniquity. But although they  
repented, and the Lord hearkened  
and heard their prayers, and restored  
to them their land, and blessed them,  
they again rebelled; yea, and al-  
though they had the law and the  
prophets, they denied him of whom  
Moses in the law and the prophets  
did write. They disbelieved, and in  
their unbelief and rebellion cried out,  
"His blood be on us, and on our  
children." "Away with him! crucify  
him!" Surely no greater wickedness  
was ever manifest on the earth than  
the persecution and crucifixion of  
that infinitely innocent and holy  
Being, the Son of God. Peter, speak-  
ing to his blood-thirsty persecutors  
on the day of pentecost, says, "Him  
being delivered by the determinate  
counsel and foreknowledge of God,  
ye have taken, and by wicked hands  
have crucified and slain." Our Lord  
said to them, "Ye serpents, ye gener-  
ation of vipers, how can ye escape  
the damnation of hell? Wherefore,  
behold, I send unto you prophets,  
and wise men, and scribes: and some  
of them ye shall kill and crucify; and  
some of them shall ye scourge in  
your synagogues, and persecute them  
from city to city: that upon you may  
come all the righteous blood shed  
upon the earth, from the blood of  
righteous Abel unto the blood of  
Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom  
ye slew between the temple and the  
altar." This is the language of our  
Lord to the wicked and unbelieving  
Jews. He also said to Jerusalem,  
"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that  
killest the prophets, and stonest them  
which are sent unto thee; how often  
would I have gathered thy children  
together, even as a hen gathereth her  
chickens under her wings, and ye  
would not! Behold, your house is  
left unto you desolate." Here is a  
prediction of our Lord of the fearful  
punishment that would be poured  
out upon the wicked Jews, which  
was completely fulfilled in the de-

struction of Jerusalem, the awful sufferings that were sent upon the Jews for their wickedness during the siege, and their dispersion among the nations of the earth. Surely came all the righteous blood shed upon the earth upon that wicked people. This is in complete accord with the prophetic language of the psalmist to which our attention is called by brother Hancks. That language is, "For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them." None of the wicked of the earth have stood out more prominently than the unbelieving Jews. They said of the innocent Son of God, "Away with him! crucify him!" Surely they in that act of unbelief and wickedness wrung out the dregs of God's indignation and wrath against sin; and in their fearful overthrow and the destruction of their great city, when some of them, to satisfy an insatiate hunger, killed and did eat their own children; and others, in order to escape further suffering, rushed into the flames and were consumed. Then certainly, they were among the most wicked of the earth, and they by their wickedness wrung out the dregs of God's indignation against the wicked; yea, and they were made to drink that cup to its very bottom. The apostle says, "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Ah, dear saint, perhaps you will say to me that it is time now for us to turn our thoughts and meditations from that dark and gloomy picture, to that which will carry us away from the fearful deformity and consequences of sin. But, my dear brother, my dear sister, the children of Israel were the chosen people of God. To them were committed the oracles of God, and for their fearful wickedness they were very sorely scourged. Let us remember still further that they were a typical people, and that the church, the anti-type of that people, has been made to suffer throughout this dispensation for their departures from the faith of the Son of God. We have quoted, "The Lord shall judge his people;" and, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." He judged Israel, and punished them sorely for their idolatry and wickedness; and now, dear saint, he is judging you, but to you he says, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." The apostle calls up the daily experience of God's dear people when he says, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." The Lord chastened Israel sorely, but he

never forsook them until all his purposes were fully accomplished with them. If we constitute a part of spiritual Israel he will surely chasten us for our rebellion; but let us remember that the chastening of the Lord accomplishes two great and wonderful things for his saints. To them it is an evidence that they are the children of God. The apostle says, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." The other is, that it carries the dear child of God to a point where he realizes his poverty, and his entire dependence upon divine and sovereign grace for all that he has, either temporally or spiritually. The promises of the gospel are then most sweet to him. When his Lord says to him, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," he is made to rejoice in the fond assurance of that faith which works by love; a faith that looks to Jesus, who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. It is then he can say,

"I'm rich to all intents of bliss  
If thou, O Lord, art mine."

In the Psalm to which our attention is called it is written, "All the horns of the wicked will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted." The word "horns" is used in the Scriptures to declare power. All the power of the Jews was cut off when they were dispersed from Jerusalem. The power and glory of the righteous was exalted when our Lord arose from the tomb; for then the warfare of the righteous was accomplished, and they received double for all their sins. None can be poorer than those who are lying in the stillness of the tomb. Our Lord had gone down into its dark caverns, and had thus become poor indeed; but he came forth from that poverty and darkness a mighty conqueror, walking in the greatness of his strength, proclaiming to an astonished world, "Mine own arm hath brought salvation unto me." He in his poverty had passed through death, had passed through the grave, bringing everlasting riches and righteousness unto his redeemed. Then surely the horns of the righteous were exalted by our glorious Lord when he came rejoicing, bringing his sheaves, all the redeemed, with him; for they were one with him; one in life, one in death, one in the resurrection, and will be one with him throughout the endless cycles of eternity, amidst the unfading glories of the fairer world on high. Then in these feeble and rambling thoughts we have, brother Hancks, a feeble contrast drawn between those who drink the cup of God's indignation against the wicked, and those who, while clothed with mortality, are poor in spirit, but who in their oneness with their Lord are made heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord

Jesus Christ; heirs to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for them, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. While here below they can most sweetly sing,

"Fear not, brethren, joyful stand  
On the borders of your land;  
Christ, your Father's eldest Son,  
Bids you undismayed go on."

To his wondrous name be all the glory.

H. COX.

#### ROMANS XIII. 8.

"OWE no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

This is one of those directions or commands which the apostles were authorized to give to the church, and which are all in harmony with the teachings of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those who have been called by grace. These commands, and the constant exhortations to take heed to them and obey them, are very important, because there is a constant opposition to them in their carnal nature, and in the world about them. In the preceding verses the apostle enjoins subjection to the powers that be, and shows that this subjection is not to be given merely for fear of the wrath of the government, but for conscience's sake. "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." It is only when any dues are improperly withheld that one can be said to owe them in the blameworthy sense of the text. These dues of all kinds are capable of being paid, so that they will not be owed. Paying them as often as they are due, we do not owe them. But it is not so with love. That is always owed by the Lord's people; and all the expressions of love that can be given, all the payments of that debt that can possibly be made, will never satisfy it, nor reduce in the least degree the sweet burden of this precious obligation. It can never cease to be owed to our brethren in Christ. The apostle evidently speaks of it in this peculiar way in this connection to show that when we recognize this constant debt of love we owe, we shall never willingly owe any man any other debt. That is, that this love, which worketh no ill to his neighbor, and which therefore is the fulfilling of the law, will cause us to desire to pay all our debts to every man. The one to whom we owe a debt, such as custom, tribute, fear, or anything else, may be only a worldly man, for whom we cannot have that love which we feel toward the people of God. It is not, then, any especial love to him which makes us anxious to render unto him his due, but the love of God in our heart, which goes out toward all whom we know as his children. This love is an active principle, which makes us desire to follow that which is right

toward all men, and avoid working ill to any.

The direction of the apostle would not prevent one from borrowing money or contracting a debt in the ordinary transactions of business. One cannot be properly said to owe what is not yet due. It would be wrong to contract a debt when I have no good reason to believe that I can pay at the appointed time; and if a child of God should thoughtlessly do so he would thus bring guilt upon his conscience, and pierce himself through with many sorrows.

But one who has the most honest intentions, and has exercised all possible care, may be overtaken by misfortune, and so be rendered unable to pay his just debt. In that case all he can do is to frankly acknowledge the debt, and keep in mind, and let it be understood that he regards all his ability to earn wages as belonging to his creditor until the obligation shall be discharged. Should he work for his creditor, or be sold to work as a hired servant toward payment of the debt, as in Israel under the law, his personal needs and those of his family must be supplied. Therefore one in this condition can rightfully judge that what he can earn must first be applied to supply himself and his family with the strict necessities of life; after that all he can earn belongs to his creditor.

Governments have made laws to relieve debtors from their obligations upon certain conditions, in order that they may again enter into business unembarrassed by debts. Those who have honest principles, even among natural men, though they may take advantage of such laws for a time, still hold themselves responsible to pay their debts as soon as possible. Much more those who have the Spirit of Christ, and whose consciences have been made tender in the fear of the Lord, will understand that no earthly laws can release them from any just obligation; nor, when exercised by that Spirit, and enlightened to see and understand and feel its teachings, do they want to be helped or enabled to avoid payment. They are under law to Christ, their heavenly King, which law is written in their heart. That law never releases the debtor except through the forgiveness of the creditor, which can never be claimed as a right, but may be asked as a mercy.

I remember having seen and heard in former years discussions between brethren as to the right of Christians to take advantage of laws that release the debtor; and sometimes I have wondered how this could be a subject upon which there could be difference of opinion among the living family of God. If earthly governments could release one from the obligation of his just debts, they would be able to break down one of the most important principles of truth, and would disturb the very foundation of the church of God; but this is not their prerogative. The

debt which the just and holy law of God shows resting upon the sinner had to be fully paid before the sinner could be released; and he must have the proof of that payment by the dear Redeemer as his Surety given to him before he can realize freedom from that debt in his conscience. The dear Savior, having paid every jot and tittle of the awful debt, freely forgives his dear chosen people the whole of it. This is that system of liberal things which the gospel presents. Jesus is the liberal one who deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things he and all his people stand.—Isa. xxxii. 8. If we had been able to do anything toward paying that debt, our release from it would not have been a matter of liberality, but of right. A man is not called liberal because he pays his workmen their wages. The law will compel him to pay them. But if one gathers the poor and helpless, and pays all their debts, and then forgives them those debts, and furnishes them with all they need freely, that is true liberality.

The system of salvation upon conditions to be performed by the creature is not a system of liberality, but the reverse. It is a vile system, the teaching of which makes empty the soul of the hungry, causes the drink of the thirsty to fail, and destroys the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right.—Isaiah xxxii. 1-7. The needy soul speaks right in acknowledging the justice of the claim against him, and his own inability to pay. The law, he says, is holy and just and good and spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.—Rom. vii. 12-14. The system that would cause them to ignore the justice of their condemnation is a vile system. To those whose consciences have been made tender in fear of the Lord it shows no ground of hope. So far as they can be made to believe the vile doctrine that without some merit of their own they cannot be saved, their empty soul is made hungry, for they know that upon that ground they can never be saved. They are ten thousand talents in debt; and if they could perform perfect works for a thousand years it would be only what is justly required of a man who owes nothing, and none of it could be applied to pay the debt. But when they are shown that justice has been executed for them, the law satisfied, the debt paid, their sins covered and forever put away, and they freely forgiven by the dear Friend who, as their Surety, has done all this, and made to stand just and holy in him, then they have indeed great reason to rejoice and praise the Lord. This is the salvation of God. These are the liberal things devised by this Liberal One, who has provided drink for the thirsty, filled the hungry with good things, called the poor to the enjoyment of eternal riches in the kingdom of heaven, given the sick and perishing eternal health and salvation, and made the poor, vile, mourning sinner rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Those who have received this infinite blessing of salvation are made to feel and acknowledge all the claims of truth and justice in their dealings with men, and also to feel the movings of a spirit of mercy and tender compassion toward the poor and weak and unfortunate. As debtors, the Spirit of him who paid in full the just demands of the law against them will make them desire to pay every just debt; and as creditors, the Spirit of that dear Jesus who has freely forgiven them so great a debt when they had nothing to pay, and daily shows them such wonderful forgiving love and mercy, will move them with feelings of compassion for those who are struggling under a heavy load, making every possible effort and sacrifice to pay what they owe, and will make them desire to help as far as they may to bear the burden. This salvation says within the heart of all to whom it comes what the apostle says to them in loving and solemn exhortation, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Jan. 19, 1888.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Nov., 1887.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish the following experience of sister Jackson, when space will permit. To me it has the right ring, ascribing all glory to God.

Your brother in hope,

M. VAIL.

FORTVILLE, Ind., Oct. 17, 1887.

DEAR ELDER VAIL:—You requested me, when you were here at our association, to write to you the Lord's dealings with me, and it is now in much weakness and trembling that I attempt to do so; and as I may be deceived in myself as to what I am about to write you, my pen almost fails me.

If I know myself, it was in the month of October, 1885, that I first felt myself a lone, despised wretch. At first I knew not what was the matter with me. I heard Elder Lester preach a sermon, which seemed to be a blessing to my poor soul. It seemed that I was being aroused from a long sleep, which had lasted all my life, and I had just begun to realize my horrible position. I had always been a great lover of dancing, and other wild, worldly ways; but now I cared nothing about that, for I was in such trouble about what would become of me. I felt that the frowns of a just God were upon me, and if I got what I deserved it would be the punishments of hell. Before this I had always feared the devil, and would try to do better; but it seemed the more I tried to do better the worse I got. I heard Elder Curtis preach a blessed sermon, in which he told some of his experience, and I began to realize that I was not the only one who had been in this condition. About this time I had many strange dreams, which pressed upon

my mind, one of which I will give. I thought I was in a crowd, and Satan appeared, and followed me wherever I went. I broke in at a window of a house that was standing by to hide from him; but the door had been left ajar, and he came in and followed me. Just as he came in he said, "My Father has let me pass through worse places than this." He called God his Father. But he was going to take me, as it seemed I had been given to him. I was afraid, and tried to get away; but the more I ran the closer he got, until I found I could not get away. I fell helpless and hopeless upon the floor, giving up in despair, when he turned and left me. So it is, dear brother, in our experience. When we find that we are nothing, worse than nothing, and can do nothing, then the Lord will help us. I had similar dreams, but none that made so deep an impression as that one. My father and mother have been members of the church since I was small. They loved their meetings, and it was always a pleasure for them to go. My parents never insisted upon my going, and therefore I attended very seldom. They are not like some persons, who think we can get religion whenever we wish; but they think as I do, that whenever it is the good pleasure of our Lord and Master to call us he will do so.

At the times when I had those dreams I was in great distress. Sometimes this burden of guilt would pass away, and I would be as unconcerned as ever. Once, I well remember, while I was feeling very badly, I had a talk with Elder Weaver, of which I have often thought. It appeared to me that this burden of guilt would always trouble me. I prayed, or rather tried to pray; for it appeared to me that my prayers reached no higher than my head, and would fall to the ground unheeded. I thought I was so ignorant that God could not hear me. Everything was in my heart, but I could not speak it; but God knows the heart as well as the words. I would often say, What are mortals, that thou art mindful of them? While I was thinking of my awful condition, sitting and sewing, I was filled with joy, and praised God; but I did not think he could notice me. I thought if I died then, and was cast into everlasting torment, I deserved it; but our heavenly Father looked so righteous that I could not help praising him, however humbled I was. But the joy soon left me, and I was more miserable than before. When night came I went to bed, but did not think that I could sleep. I thought I would die if I did not get rest. I tried to pray, but in vain. I finally dropped off to sleep, and when morning came I felt but little better. My most miserable feelings did not prevent me from thinking of the little joy I had received. I went to see an associate of mine baptized, and I thought if I could find rest and be baptized I would give—but what would I give?

I had nothing to give, only to give up in despair. It had been two months since that blessed day before I received a joy that satisfied me. It was on the fifteenth day of April, 1886. While I was washing dishes I began to feel happy. My oldest sister was sitting near me, and I said I had something to tell her. She wanted to know what it was; but instead of telling her I slipped out of the house, ashamed that I had said anything about it. My heart failed me then. I cried for some time, but wished to keep it all secret; but she called me, and requested me to tell her what I had promised. After many trials I succeeded in telling her some of my troubles, and also told her of the joy that I had received, but that I was not yet satisfied. We went into the house, and soon went to bed. She dropped off to sleep, leaving me awake. While I was lying there a spiritual joy swept over me, and I felt that my sins were gone forever. I felt so light that I thought I was moving upward, and looked around to see if I was yet in bed. With this joy I fell asleep, to awake in the morning with the same joyful thoughts. As soon as my sister awoke I told her of the blessed tidings from the Master. I got up and ran into the kitchen to tell my mother, shouting and crying of the glorious blessing that I had received. I ate my breakfast, and then went into another room and picked up the dear old Baptist hymn book, and opened where it says,

"Sinful, and blind, and poor,  
And lost without thy grace,  
Thy mercy I implore,  
And want to see thy face.  
Begging, I sit by the wayside,  
Longing to know Christ crucified

I thought how long I had been thus sitting by the wayside, longing to know Christ crucified. I opened the book at another place, and the song that presented itself was this,

"Attend, my ear; my heart, rejoice,  
While Jesus from his throne,  
Before the bright angelic hosts,  
Makes his last sentence known.

"When sinners, banish'd from his face,  
To raging flames are driven,  
His voice, with melody divine,  
Thus calls his saints to heaven."

I was relieved now of my burden of guilt, and felt so happy that neither tongue nor pen can tell half, and no one knows except those who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. I found that the Baptist people were the ones I loved most of all, and I had a great desire to join them and be baptized; and on the twenty-fourth day of the same month I had the blessed privilege of being numbered with the Baptists, and was baptized the following day by Elder John Weaver.

Now I have written my trials and joys. I am young and ignorant, but I hope I have not written anything contrary to the experience of God's people. In connection with this I will say that your exceedingly welcome visit to our State, and the excellent sermons you delivered, are

something that will not soon be effaced from my memory. I hope you will be able to visit us again, for we would so welcome you back; but if you should not be permitted to do so soon, we would be exceedingly glad to hear from you.

Hoping that you remember your humble sister in Christ, I will close.  
CORA L. JACKSON.

WATERLOO, N. Y., Nov. 15, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In looking over and reviewing the last twelve years of my life, I am led to wonder at myself. There was a time when I was in the "gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity;" when I drank in sin as one drinketh water; when I desired not the knowledge of God or his ways; but the time came when I heard something speak within me, and I am led to believe it was the same voice that spoke to Saul of Tarsus, "Why persecutest thou me?" I could say, "Who art thou, Lord?" O how I rebelled against that voice! I used every means possible. I even tried to believe infidel principles. I tried to look on the Bible as an uninspired volume. I said, If I ever grow to be a man, I will not have such a book in my house. I did not consider it a decent book to read. I well remember talking with my brother, and trying to convince him of the same thing. I was certainly sincere in my belief. Soon after this I began to doubt, and the more I read the more I doubted; and then those words mentioned above came to my mind, "Why persecutest thou me?" Something seemed to tell me that I was persecuting Jesus. O what anguish of soul I passed through! I had given way to profanity, and it had become one of my besetting sins. When I uttered an oath, it seemed to me that it would be just if God would send me to hell. Then I would try to cover my sin and get rid of it by uttering a worse oath. When I retired at night I would not dare to go to sleep, for fear I should awake in eternal torment. My anguish was so great that I was led to cry, "Lord, save, or I perish." I kept my Bible near me, and read it often, to try to find something to comfort me; but no comfort came. Condemnation was written everywhere. And if ever a prayer was uttered from a poor, afflicted soul, I believe it was from mine. "Lord, save, or I perish." I then took my Bible and prayed that I might open to something that would cast a little light on my dark path. The first place my eye rested upon was the fifty-seventh Psalm. "Have mercy upon me, O God: according unto thy loving-kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." This part of David's prayer seemed to be mine. Soon after this I went home to visit my parents, and while at family worship it seemed that all my sins were be-

fore me as a great mountain. When my father had finished praying, I cried aloud for mercy and deliverance; and then and there, if I am not deceived, the Lord spoke to me, and said, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven." That burden which I then felt has never returned to me since. But it was not long after I had such rejoicing, before I had doubts arise in my mind like this, You have been deceived; this is all imaginary; you will soon feel different, and then you will know you are deceived. But one thing seemed strange to me, and that was, what I read in the Bible had a different meaning from what it had before. There seemed to be a few promises I could claim as my own. I also desired the company of christian people. When I had an opportunity to speak in a church meeting, I did so; but what seemed very strange to me, no one seemed to know any of my feelings. They told me I ought to join the church, and then I would feel better. Some two or three years after this I removed to another village, and there I thought I would be able to go to meeting and enjoy myself. Soon there was a great revival in the place, and of course I thought that was a good thing for the place; for every day I saw so much sin and wickedness that I thought if the christian people would all work together the Lord would certainly hear their prayers, and there would be a great many converted. Well, there was a preacher that labored with the people, and many, they said, were converted. I thought there had been a great work done. But when the meetings closed, and a few months had passed, most of the converts had grown cold and turned back to their old practices and sinful ways, and seemed to be worse than before. Then I was led to wonder if it could be possible that God had saved them with an everlasting salvation, when they in so short a time could deny their profession. Some of them united with the various so-called churches, and I was invited to join; but I felt that I could not join any of them. These words came to my mind, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." One of the ministers asked me one day why I did not join the church. He said he believed I was a christian man. I told him I could not find a church I could feel at home in. He said I was a queer man, and that he never saw one like me before. I told him I believed I must be an outsider, as there seemed to be churches enough. Soon after this I heard of some Old School Baptists, and I began to make some inquiries about them. My father had been trying to find some Old School Baptists for more than twenty years, but failed to find them. As for myself, I did not want to find them. I had read some of the SIGNS, which my father had taken, and I thought they were the most selfish people I ever heard of. When I joined a

church I wanted to belong where they had more liberal views. At this time I had never heard an Old School Baptist preach. I wrote to my father that there was to be an association of Old School Baptists. He came to my place the night before the association to go with me. The next morning he said he thought he would drive home again, for he had his work to attend to, and he had been disappointed many times. I said to him, "If you will go, I will go with you." So we went, and found it to be the Turkey River Association, of Iowa. When we entered the house one of the Elders was preaching the same Jesus that told me I was persecuting him; the same Jesus that said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. I will not leave you comfortless." O how those words went to my soul! Salvation by grace, and grace alone, was the theme. Those Elders told my experience better than I can write it, for they had passed through the same things. They had no good works to boast of, and all they had done was of no value. This was what I believed I had experienced. I remember the door of the church was opened, and an opportunity given for the reception of members. The first thing I knew I was on my feet, and relating some of God's dealing with me. I cannot remember what I related to the church, and this is a mystery to me. But I do remember that they asked me whether I would be satisfied if the church saw fit to reject me. I told them I would, as I did not feel worthy of a place among them. But I was received, and baptized that Sunday afternoon by Elder Harrison Butler. I feel very thankful to the brethren for bearing with me for the past nine years. I can say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Dear brethren Beebe, if you think this will be of any use, or will benefit any of the household of faith, you can publish it in the SIGNS.

WM. J. BLAKE.

VARNA, Ill., Dec. 11, 1887.

TO THE BRETHREN AND SISTERS, READERS OF THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES:—Many times it has been impressed on my mind to try to write some of the things which at times I have been made to realize were the dealings of a kind providence with a sinner. There have been two things, among others, that have kept me from making the attempt. First, the fear at times that I had nothing genuine of which to write; and second, that if I have been translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, to speak or write of these things would only be to gratify the flesh, knowing that Satan is ever ready to take advantage. Whatever is herein writ-

ten, I desire may be to the glory of God, and to the edification of brethren and sisters; for it is with fear that I have never been called upon thus to testify.

From my earliest recollection my parents were members of the Primitive Baptist Church; but I would have thought just as much of them if they had belonged to some other church. I was always ashamed of their belief and church relations, and when their preachers would come to our house it was with little respect I treated them, and looked upon them as a very ignorant class of persons. The subject of death presented itself to me at an early age; yet I somehow got the idea that I should not have to die, although I could realize that everybody else would have to pass from life to death. Why this was so I cannot tell. Since then I have been made to realize that I should have to go the way of all the earth, and that after death the judgment. There have been times at which it seemed to me I was very near the time of my departure.

As I passed along in boyhood years, vanity increased, and that fleshly and devilish nature was rapidly developed, and by the time I was seventeen years of age I was on the verge of outbreaking profanity. I had reached the point of swearing to myself when angry. But from this time forward there seemed to be a restraining influence gradually arising, which seemed to overcome this outbreaking wickedness. When I read a christian experience I feel like saying, with Elder Chick, "It is wonderful," and there is nothing more wonderful to me in my own experience than the bringing about of this wonderful change at this particular time; and I have been made to realize that nothing short of the power of almighty God can bring about this change.

A sorrow on account of sin began to come over me. I had determined not to let any one know of these things; and during sleepless nights I would turn quietly on my bed, lest my parents should suspect something was the matter, as they slept in the same room with me. As I walked home one evening with my older brother, he asked me if I thought there was anything in this thing of religion. I replied, very promptly, that I thought there was. As he was not a church member, I did not suspect him as thinking or noticing anything unusual with me. Since then I believe he, as well as others, had discovered the change.

In the meantime I witnessed the baptism of my oldest sister, as she had been received by the church where my parents belonged. To me this was a solemn occasion. I could see a grand and sacred beauty in the ordinance; but at that time I did not feel that I could "bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

Time passed along until the next summer, with nothing of importance, except that my troubles were in-

creasing. I had become deeply interested in reading the life of Elder Wilson Thompson. In August, one of my younger sisters having experienced a hope in Christ, at the early age of eleven years and five months, was received and baptized, having a very remarkable experience. These things only seemed to increase my trouble. Heretofore I would often dream of being in places of danger, and would be awakened by being overtaken by the danger; but now I would dream of being in lofty and dangerous places, and instead of being allowed to fall, or to be overtaken by the danger, there would be some mysterious way of escape provided. These dreams have been of sufficient importance to present themselves to my mind frequently ever since.

Up to this time, I thought these things were known only to myself and to my God. One Sunday morning I opened my clothes-chest, and the first thing I saw was a little slip of paper, with something like the following written thereon, "George, your aunt thinks you ought to be baptized, and I do too; and if you would like to be, write it on the back of this slip of paper." I could not help writing the word yes. It had been written by my mother. I cannot describe the awfulness of feeling that came over me at finding this writing. I was just directed to go to the barn to get a bridle. I was very glad to get out by myself, as it seemed to me the house could not contain me. I looked at the steep hill above the house as I went out, and could have wished it to have fallen on me and hid me from the face of the earth. I returned from the barn, and after some time my mind was relieved to some little extent; and when I went to my chest the slip of paper had been removed. I could not wish it back, for now I knew my dearest earthly friend knew of my trouble, which had become so great as to be almost unbearable alone; although this writing did not bring about any further conversation between my mother and myself.

Being only a boy of eighteen, and small of my age, I was engaged in boyish pursuits. I had planted and raised some peanuts on the top of the large hill above our house. While on my knees, taking these from the ground, with a cloud of deep settled gloom over my mind, the thought came into my mind that Saturday would be the regular meeting day, and it seemed quicker than thought that the words came, "Go and be baptized." It seemed not only as words put into my mind, but as if spoken by a voice. I cannot well describe my feeling at this moment; it was a feeling entirely different from what I had experienced heretofore; and yet it was not a feeling of such extreme joy as I have heard others speak at similar times. It was a comfortable feeling; a feeling of relief. It was near evening time, and as I returned home I sat

some time on the fence at the brow of the hill, and viewed the surrounding country. Nature looked different from what it had a short time before. Everything wore a quiet and peaceful beauty. In the evening I sought an opportunity to tell these things to my mother. I expressed to her a doubt in regard to the church receiving me. She said she thought they would receive me. Accordingly I conferred not with flesh and blood, but on Saturday presented myself to the church. Being young and backward, I told them nothing voluntarily, but answered a few questions, and was received for baptism. This has troubled me much, that I could not tell these things to the church. On the first Sunday in October, 1875, I was baptized by Elder Ephraim Barker, in the fellowship of Bethel Church, in Noble County, Ohio. I felt very happy at the water, and continued to be free from doubts until on Monday before noon, when I began to fear lest I was deceived and had deceived the church. At times I realize a sweet hope in Christ; at other times I find myself hunting for the grave of Moses, to find some tangible evidence of these things. I have passed through much trouble besides those herein mentioned. At the age of twenty-five it seemed to me I had passed through more and deeper waters than any one else of my age. In 1881 I came to Illinois, and some time after united with the Salem Church of Primitive Baptists, in Marshall County, where my membership now is. I seem to be assimilated to the surroundings, which is a state of inactivity and coldness, although I feel established in the truth.

I remain your unworthy brother,  
G. C. JORDAN.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Dec. 20, 1887.

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST JESUS:—It is written concerning the Son of God, our great High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, that "He himself hath suffered being tempted, [and] he is able to succor them that are tempted."—Hebrews ii. 18. Again, it speaks of our compassionate Redeemer being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."—Heb. iv. 15. I am sure that those who are in living and experimental unity with Christ will also be touched with the feeling of the infirmities of the members in particular of the church of Christ, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.—Eph. i. 22, 23. How clearly and precious this is described by the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians xii. 12-27. "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." Some carnal religionists there be "not holding the Head;" whereas those who are in the faith acknowledge that it is from Christ Jesus the Head that "the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint

supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19. The glorious doctrine of Christ recorded in the Scriptures of truth, and revealed in power by the Holy Ghost in the experience of God's elect, is what I hope the Lord has constrained me to delight in. Jehovah says, "Ye are my witnesses;" and it does appear to me that faithful witnesses are few. Many indeed there be who herald themselves throughout the land, and say they are "ambassadors for Christ;" but Christ has not sent them, for their pernicious ways and doctrines clearly mark them out as ministers of Satan transformed indeed (in order to deceive) as ministers of righteousness. They are not servants of Christ, but ambassadors of antichrist; and though they affirm that the Lord liveth, they are destitute of the knowledge of God, and therefore swear falsely.—Jere. v. 2. My heart is often vexed (2 Peter ii. 7, 8) with the vile and desperate utterances of those who cling to the name "christian," but who, like those described in Isaiah iv. 1, say, "We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." But the child of God is brought to prove that anything short of the truth as it is in Jesus is not bread, and satisfieth not (Isa. lv. 2); that the dear Lamb of God himself is their only true bread of life; that he himself is their nourisher and cherisher (Eph. v. 29); that his glorious apparel is the only clothing they desire to wear and to be found in (Phil. iii. 9); and the word of their testimony is only concerning the things of the kingdom that they have been given eyes to see, and those things in which the Lord their God manifests himself unto them as he does not unto the world.—Acts xxvi. 16. I am satisfied, dear brother, that all our trials, of whatever kind they may be, are in the appointment of our God, and happy are we to receive therein revelations of the Lord our God to our souls.

Since receiving yours I have been called to taste affliction in our little family. Two weeks ago our two youngest children were taken sick, and seven days ago our dear and lovely boy died, aged two years and four months. Our first-born child is living, but we have lost five infants since. Before the birth of our dear boy I was much exercised in my soul before the Lord, and my desire to the Lord was that this time we might have a living child. I felt to be in a humble state of mind, desiring to be in submission to the pleasure of the Most High. (O how good the Lord was to me, to thus reconcile me to his will.) One day, while reading the first chapter of the first book of Samuel, an assurance sprang up in my soul that we should have a living son; and I said, His name is Samuel, "because I have asked him of the

Lord."—1 Samuel i. 20. A few days after this the thought entered my mind, Would I be willing to give the child back again unto the Lord, as Hannah did? I felt then that I could be willing, and told the Lord so. In due time the child was born. He grew up, was weaned a lovely boy, and this autumn his mother made him a little coat.—1 Samuel ii. 19. He wore it but a few times, took sick, and fell asleep. While the child was sick many were the cries to the Lord that he might be spared to us and restored to health again; but the day before he died all that had passed through my mind concerning the child before he was born was brought clearly to my remembrance, and then I felt that the Lord was about to take our dear boy from us. O how I longed to be kept submissive to the good pleasure of the Lord, that he would not suffer me to repine, that I might truly be "reconciled to God," and from my heart say, "Thy will be done." Now, dear brother, to the praise of the name of our covenant God, I feel that I can bear witness to the kindness and faithfulness of the Lord to my soul, that up to the present he has so supported and comforted my heart concerning the child that the bitter waters of being bereaved of our lovely boy have been sweetened, and this cup that our heavenly Father has given me I have been able to drink; for there has been much gracious assurance given me from the Lord that our child liveth before the Lord forever, to worship God within the veil. "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have lent him to the Lord: as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshiped the Lord there." I have found at this time, as I have many times found before, that the God of Israel is a very present help in time of trouble; and happy do I feel that the Lord has been pleased to stay my mind upon himself, and has kept me from the rebellion and vileness of my carnal nature. O "that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!"—1 Chron. iv. 10.

Dear brother, how precious is the thought that our God has predestinated the bitter as well as the sweet, and that all the appointments of our God are in love to our souls. "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him."—Job xxiii. 14. I hope, dear brother, this may find you and yours in health; and that you and the dear people of God among whom you labor in the gospel may richly experience the blessing of the Lord resting upon you.

I am, I hope, your brother in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,

FRED. W. KEENE.

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him."—Nahum i. 7.

The above language has been very

sweet to me of late in my meditations over the rugged path of the christian. The prophet had evidently experienced the truth of the foregoing language, and hence it is fitly spoken, and is "like apples of gold in pictures of silver" to the poor, weary ones who are carrying a heavy heart and troubled mind. Where is the one that has not experienced the truth of the language, "The Lord is good?" Can the unregenerate rejoice in it? No; it is no comfort to him, for he has not tasted that the Lord is good. All the poor, the maimed, the halt, the blind, whom Jesus healed, felt that he was good. When Joseph was made known to his brethren, they no doubt felt that Joseph was good. When Noah and his family were saved in the ark, they could feel that the Lord was good, and a stronghold indeed. Did those that were destroyed have such feelings? Do you not suppose that Mephibosheth felt that David was a good king, to bring one who like himself was lame in both feet, and make him eat at the king's table continually? Do you not suppose that the three Hebrew children, and Daniel, could honor and extol God for their great deliverance from the fiery furnace and the lion's den? The same God that was good to all the ancients, is good to us to-day. No matter what we do, God loves us, and his love and mercy will reach us. Though storms may rage and billows roar, yet God knows our pains and groans; and Jesus being tempted in all points like as we are, is able to succor them that are tempted. Yes, he is good and a stronghold in trouble. "A man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." As a father pitieth his child, so the Lord pitieth them that trust in him. You may feel that the Lord has forsaken you, but do not fear; he will never forget you. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget; yet will I not forget thee." They are engraven on the palms of his hands, and are walled around by the *wills* and *shalls* of Jehovah. And God will ever in much mercy regard the prayer of the destitute. He is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. O trembling ones, lift up your heads and trust in the Lord. He will fight all your battles for you, without any effort on your part. In looking over the past, everything seems to say that the Lord is good, and a stronghold in trouble. Jesus holds the little ones up, and will turn his hand upon them, and rescue them from the hand of the enemy. While we are widely scattered, and all have our conflicts in some way, yet we all have to look to the same fount for life and salvation. When our troubles become so great that they are very hard to bear, we often have to flee to Jesus

for strength and fortitude to enable us to bear them; and find that he is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. God is not ignorant of our sufferings. Just think how tender and loving the natural parent is toward the suffering child. But our heavenly Father is far more tender and compassionate than the natural parent. He never slumbers nor sleeps, and never leaves us nor forsakes us. While Satan may make every effort to destroy the saint, yet God, who predestinated all things, and who controls all things in earth and hell, will not allow Satan to take his loving ones away from him. But his grace is sufficient for you, and will reach you under all circumstances. While many conflicts may be in your pathway, yet the Lord is good, and will work them all for your good and his glory, and will bring you off more than conquerors. You may be troubled about being an awful and wretched sinner, but God's grace is sufficient for the worst of sinners. The same God that brought the lion and tiger into the ark, and made them lie down with the lamb, can humble the most wicked sinner, and bring him into his fold, and will keep him under the shadow of his wings. God brings all his children on a level to see that they are but dust, and poor, sinful and wretched. They all have the same doubts and fears. I never have doubted my case any more than I have of late, and have felt that I was alone. I looked around to see if I could find a Primitive Baptist that did as badly as I did; but I could not find one. When I received the last number of the SIGNS, and read that precious little piece of Elder Chick's, about his doubts, I was revived, and thought, If as good a man as that man of God is has such doubts, I need not expect any better. Yesterday I was again revived in my feelings at a church of which I have recently accepted the care. The church was low down, and everything looked gloomy. At the close of the meeting yesterday three dear sisters came and related the wonderful dealings of God with them, and told how hard they had tried to stay away on account of their doubts and fears. Fearing, trembling ones, does not this revive you, to see that God's people are all one, and all are testifying that the Lord is good? Yea, he is a stronghold in trouble. He was so good to David in delivering him from the deep places of sorrow and tribulation. He could say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies: who satisfieth my mouth with good things." "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

"For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?" "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Is this not comforting? The poor are all the ones that have the promises. May the Lord give us grace to bear our burdens as faithful servants, and bind us all together in love.

Yours in hope of endless joy,  
LEE HANCKS.  
OZARK, Ala., Dec. 7, 1887.

CURFEW, Pa., Jan. 1, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In trying to give the readers of the SIGNS some of my early exercises of mind, in a letter published in last volume, and in the number for November first, I had spoken of my trials up to about the beginning of the year 1858, which found me reflecting seriously in regard to the future, because of my frailty by nature, and the liability that I then realized of dying in a sinful state and absolutely an alien to God.

As I stated in my former communication, I began reading the Bible, but wished to be alone while reading, for fear my friends would think I was religiously inclined. About this time it occurred to my mind to begin at Genesis and read all the Scriptures, which I soon set about to do. During the following summer I became so much engrossed with the world and its pleasures that I had almost crushed (as I thought) my secret fears, which I had greatly desired to do; but one day, in an evil hour, I felt that I had committed a sinful act which God had perfect knowledge of, even if men had not. This troubled me to such an extent that I thought I must have committed the unpardonable sin. In a strait, or when our way seems to be hedged up, we feel like resorting to something for relief, that we may be justified in our way, or be delivered in our extremity. Now to obtain relief from my burden of guilt I had resorted to reading more in the Bible, for I had no friend that I could confide in to tell the secrets of my heart; so as a refuge I fled to the law and the prophets. I had often read the story of the holy child Jesus, but could not comprehend as yet how he could be a full and complete Savior, understanding that he was born of a woman. I naturally thought he was of earthly origin, and did not possess adequate power to reach away out these many centuries to one like me; and I, like other Arminians, desired a law justification, and to the law of Moses I went. I read the Bible from the beginning to nearly the close of Ezekiel, and as a result of my search for comfort or justification I found condemnation. But while reading so much of the history of the Jewish people, which occupied considerable

of my time, which was done at intervals, and which I assiduously adhered to, I felt astonished at their stubbornness, apparent loss of memory, and blind religious zeal, that led them into idolatry in the face of bright and visible evidences of God's work among them, in sending plagues to Egypt, in dividing the waters of the Red Sea before their eyes, the closing of the same waters upon their enemies, their hunger being satisfied with the manna from heaven, their appetites for flesh being more than satisfied by the sending of quails; and when thirsty at the rock, by the servant Moses smiting the same, the waters gushing out for their relief; and in their journey through the unbroken wilderness they were not left without a guide, for the cloud covered the tabernacle by day, and the appearance of fire by night, so that when the cloud was lifted up they knew when to journey, and when it lowered they knew when to rest. After reading these and many other like experiences of the children of Israel, I thought if I could obtain such bright and plain manifestations of God's direct work with me, and his abundant and visible signs of acceptance by him, I would do a great deal better than many of those Israelites did; for I would never forget his benefits, but would serve him continually. I vainly thought that very many of those Israelites did not improve the opportunities set before them, but on the contrary, did the reverse of what their consciences dictated, or else were very forgetful of the mercies of God. As far as I could understand the law and the prophets, it seemed to condemn me, that is, I could not obtain any hope of relief from under it; for in it I read that "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Yet I thought if there was a righteousness it was a law righteousness; and my thoughts went so far as to wonder why there was any need for the New Testament, or for a man of earthly origin claiming to be the Son of God. Strange as it may appear to some who may read this, I frankly confess that after reading so much of the Old Testament I was filled with infidelity, and had some thoughts about like these: Why did Christ come? Could not the human family do good and keep good without his coming? Israel had the law of Moses, and in it the ten commandments, which emanated from a God of wisdom. Was this deficient and ineffectual, so that he must needs send his so-called Son into the world? I had heard it said by some persons that the prophets spake of Christ and his coming, so I made it a point at one time to search the prophets for the name "Christ." Failing to find it, I concluded it was all a mistake; and the New Testament now seemed to me more like fiction than truth. I, like the modern Jew, accepted the one and rejected the other. I did not yet realize, as I afterward did, the meaning of the language of the apostle, that

"The law was our school-master to bring us unto Christ." I still clung to the idea that there was a righteousness to be obtained (if to any obtainable) by the creature doing certain things, but the things to be done I could not mention; nor the extent of work to accomplish the desired object, I could not determine. All the ways of God are inscrutable, and his providence and grace go together; for while in this state of mind Elder J. C. Beeman preached one night at a neighbor's near me. I went to hear him, though it was not the first time that I had heard him. I had a little curiosity to hear what he would say, for the inquiry had arisen in my mind, What do these Old Baptists believe? I think, so far as the natural mind of a poor, ignorant boy could understand, I found out before he got done speaking. He took for his text, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

Dear brethren, publish this if you think proper. May you be successful, as ever, in the forthcoming volume of the SIGNS, to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

As ever, in fellowship,

J. BEEMAN.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 20, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Another year of our time state is about to close upon us, and will soon in its completeness be placed upon the records of the past. Eternity (in which dwelleth the God of righteousness) is not measured by days, months and years, but is one eternal now; and he who created the heavens and the earth, and also created man in his own image, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, did in the beginning predestinate all things that should take place during the sojourn of man upon the earth. Not only the way and plan of salvation, but every step of our journey, every thought and intent of the heart, and every uplifting of the hand, which was embraced in that wonderful and perfect plan, were unalterably fixed in the mind and purpose of our covenant-keeping God. Therefore all the events that have transpired during the past year have been but an unfolding of the great plan of life, laid down before the earth was formed, or before the sun and moon and stars began their unceasing journey. At each forward step of our lives the curtain of the future is drawn aside, and that which was obscurity and uncertainty to us is revealed day by day. Light shines in the dark places, and the future becomes the present; and as we go on and on the present becomes the past, and we from year to year but turn over the pages of that great book, the pages of which are all completed to the end of time. Many things have been brought to light, and many events have transpired during the past year, that have been unfathomable to our finite minds; yet while we cannot in our

short-sightedness see the wisdom and purpose of God, we know of a certainty that he doeth all things aright, and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Many of the dear saints with whom we have held sweet communion have passed from among us during the year, and now they fully realize that sweet hope which filled their souls while here; and while with bitter tears we mourn the loss of dear ones gone before, we are made to feel that their estate is brighter and lovelier than ours; for while we are still suffering from the pricks of the thorn in the flesh, we fully realize that their corruption has put on incorruption, and their mortal has put on immortality. So we groan, being burdened, while in these low grounds of sorrow, and look forward to the happy time when we shall cross to the other side, and see our dear Redeemer as he is; for then (glorious thought!) we shall be like him. While we are fulfilling our allotted time here below, we would desire to continually praise his holy name, and to cry, as in the Song of Solomon, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents." We desire, too, to feel the power of that prayer of Moses recorded in the ninetyeth Psalm, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night," &c. May we feel, as we journey along through another year, the greatness of the love wherewith our God has loved us; giving unto us his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, that he might blot out our iniquities by bearing the burden of our sins upon his own shoulders, and shedding his precious blood upon the cross at Calvary, that we might be brought into the light and liberty of his glorious kingdom. We would that our love and faith might be strong to the end of our mortal career, that with Paul we might be "persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Dear brethren Beebe, as you so truly said in the last issue of the volume just closed, that the past year had been a trying one to you, my heartfelt desire is (and I feel sure I

utter the feelings of all who are firm in the faith) that the Lord will give you strength in the future, and still sustain you, as he has done in the times that are past and gone; for the only source of our strength and sustenance is the fountain of God's unchanging love. If subscriptions have fallen off because of your valiancy for the truth, you can feel fully assured that you have wielded "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon" faithfully in your Master's service—that you have yielded to no false doctrines; and in the end you can truly say, with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," &c.

Yours in a precious hope,

B. F. COULTER.

WHO ARE OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS?

FROM my earliest recollection, dating back over forty years, I have heard a certain sect designated Old School, Ironside, Hard Shell, Black Rock, and Predestinarian Baptists. Why? Because they adhered to the old way, inquired for the old paths, and refused countenance to the new things that began to be introduced among the Baptists of America in the early part of the present century, known under the general term of Fullerism, being a brood of men-made institutions hatched by Andrew Fuller in England a few years before their introduction into America, for the avowed purpose of "lifting the Baptist denomination from the dung-hill to a position of respectability in society." Also, because they were firm and unyielding in their defense of the principles which they declared as their understanding of the teachings of God in the Scriptures of divine truth. These names were first given in ridicule by their enemies; but when they discovered that taunts and gibes could not move them from their steadfastness, and that they gloried in all the opprobrium that was heaped upon them, counting it an honor to suffer shame for the gospel's sake, and counting it all joy to be persecuted, and to have all manner of evil spoken against them falsely for Jesus' sake, their enemies began to look about for a plan that would better serve their purpose; but it took a great many years for them to discover a plan that worked satisfactorily. Finally, however, they succeeded in scaring a few of the more timid ones, with the idea that to declare that God absolutely predestinated all things would make him the "author of sin." So these timid ones, fearful lest they should dishonor Jehovah and besmirk the holy character of the Most High, cast about them to find a way out of the dilemma; forgetting that God does not take counsel of his creatures nor give them an account of his actions, or that he as a potter has power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another

unto dishonor, and that he does not require his servants to make apologies for him.

When I united with the Baptists they were known as Old School, Predestinarian Baptists, and firmly held to the principles promulgated by the meeting at Black Rock in 1832, composed of such staunch and faithful soldiers of the cross as Samuel Trott, Thomas Barton, Gabriel Conklin, Thomas Poteet, Gilbert Beebe, Edmund Reis, John Healy, and others of like precious memory; which set of principles were also published to the world in the Prospectus of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and have been faithfully adhered to by said periodical for fifty-five years, through evil as well as good report; and I rejoice that the present proprietors had rather lose the patronage they enjoy than depart in any particular from those principles. "The Absolute Predestination of all Things" was their way of presenting one of the points of doctrine for which they contended. It was not a new theory, but was substantially embodied in the "London Confession of Faith" one hundred and forty-three years before, and the same Confession in substance adopted by seven Baptist congregations in London one hundred and eighty-nine years before. So we see it was a tried stone, and had already stood the test of nearly two centuries; and when those builders came to examine it thoroughly, applying the rule, and line, and plummet thereto, they were so well satisfied of the soundness of it that they decided that it belonged of right to the building, and that the fabric would not be complete without it. Well, so it is that all genuine and true Old School Baptists have subscribed to the "absolute predestination of all things," and have subscribed themselves "Old School, Predestinarian Baptists."

This is no longer a subject of discussion; it is recorded on the pages of history as one of the things by which Old School Baptists are known. However, if one whom I believed to be a sincere inquirer after truth should come to me in any doubt as to the propriety of the expression, or of its truth, I would reason with him, and endeavor to guide him, as Philip did the eunuch; or if an open and avowed enemy of the truth should make an attack upon it, I should feel called upon to defend it, as one set for the defense of the gospel, with such ability as God might be pleased to give me. But if one, professing to be an Old School Baptist, comes railing against and ridiculing the doctrine, I do not propose to discuss the point with him. I should be compelled to say to him, You are not an Old Baptist at all; you have misunderstood yourself.

Brethren Beebe, having a little leisure, I have penned these reflections, and send them to you, to do with as you please, subscribing myself an Old School, Predestinarian Baptist.

A. B. FRANCIS.

HERNDON, Va., Jan. 31, 1888.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Jan. 10, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Another year has passed since my last remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and I am admonished that I should either renew my subscription or request a discontinuance to my address. Remembering the comfort and encouragement derived from the perusal of its pages during the past ten years, I should not willingly part company with its contributors. True the language, the sentiments, the experiences, of those who write for the SIGNS, seem foolish to the learned Greeks of our day, who believe and teach that the kingdom of heaven comes by observation, and that man by searching can find out God. True that those whose righteousness is of the law can see no form nor comeliness in an unmerited Savior, nor reason in his vicarious atonement. True that the simple, child-like faith of this peculiar people seems illogical, unphilosophical, to the "wise and prudent," and inconsistent with the "traditions of the fathers," or creeds taught in the schools of learning. Nevertheless it is a tower of strength to believe that God, the Creator, is wiser, more just and true than any of his creatures, and that he reveals himself to whomsoever he will, either as a just Judge, demanding the utmost farthing, or as a merciful High Priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, or with power on earth to forgive sins, and to quicken whom he will. And so from first to last the christian finds hope and comfort only by looking up to the everlasting hills, whence his strength cometh. Thus assured that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his," the earthquake's shock or mighty, rushing wind of mere human energy, is as nothing beside "the still, small voice" which each can hear for himself only. Amid the fiery trials of life, how consoling to hear the words of this voice,

"The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design  
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine"

When, like Elijah, the discouraged advocate of truth and righteousness cries out in anguish of soul, "They have digged down thine altars, and slain thy prophets, and they seek my life also," the same voice whispers, Be not afraid; for I have reserved to myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal, and, behold, I will make thee to stand in safety before thine enemies, to prove that God is God, and not Baal. Is it not a glorious thought that Elijah's God, the God of the Bible, still lives to vindicate his majesty and power, and to reveal to poor sinners the riches of his grace, and the height and depth of his everlasting love? But our heavenly Father has ordained not only the sweet, cheering sunshine of promising spring, and of the golden harvest season, but the chilling blasts of

autumn and the fierce storms of winter perform their part in carrying out God's beneficent purpose also. If the sunshine of prosperity be given us, too, oft are we ungrateful, forgetting the giver. So in adversity we are oft in doubt, distrusting the Father's promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Brethren, we are entering upon perilous times. The love of many will wax cold, and evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse. The hearts of men are growing harder, and everywhere temples are building to "gain as God." The idolatry of covetousness was never more prevalent or universal. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" is still a solemn truth. Neither shall God be mocked; for as ye sow, so shall ye reap. In the midst of the growing rationalism and materialism of our day, Zion's watchmen should see eye to eye, and lift up the voice of God's truth as one man. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." May God grant his children "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and make them appear indeed as the "candle of the Lord," so moved by his Holy Spirit that others, seeing their good works, shall be constrained to glorify our Father in heaven. And when we have been tried in God's crucible, "the furnace of afflictions," may we come forth as gold, and rejoice together, when the Redeemer shall come "the second time, without sin unto salvation."

May brotherly love continue, and that charity that endureth forever.

From an often doubting Thomas, if a child of grace at all,

JOHN SEITZ.

#### PRAYER AND PREDESTINATION.

"BEHOLD, he prayeth."—Acts ix. 11.

That man is blessed who prayeth, just as they that mourn are blessed. It is only the child of God, the quickened sinner, that can pray, in the sense that Paul is spoken of in Acts ix. 11. Prayer is one of the "all things" that God predestinated. The weak, trembling child of God may sometimes, listening to the suggestions of Satan, say, Well, if all things are predestinated, what is the use of praying? Is not the example of our risen Lord a sufficient answer to that? And we know that he prayed to the Father; and he taught his disciples how to pray. He formulated the prayer, "Our Father who art in heaven," &c. It is impious in us to wish to lift the veil that screens from us the mysteries that God has seen fit to withhold. Let us trust him. Let us be still, and know that he is God; for he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind. And we know that he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" and we know that "he doeth all things well." Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done," and said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." In our weakness we know not what is best for us. But I am thankful that God has

promised to bless his children far above what they are able to even ask or think. It has not entered into the heart or mind of man, the blessings that he has reserved for his loved ones. Let us ask him to forgive us wherein we ask amiss. Now the question with each of us is, "Am I his? or am I not?" Was I chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world? or is there any chance about it? For if there is a chance about one thing, there is a chance work running all through the "all things" that God works after the counsel of his own will. Let us not have it that way; for the sure word and promise of God is all that is any comfort to me. Do we love the brethren? Do we love the blessed truths of the Bible? Do we love to hear those blessed truths proclaimed? Do we disbelieve the Bible, which tells us of the predestination of all things? Will we, poor, puny mortals, dare to judge God, or reply against him, or rail against the truth as it is in Jesus? Will we impiously presume to apologize for God because he did decree all things, and did not decree to suit us? Or will we question his wisdom in not endowing us with omniscience or prescience? Or will we dare to say that God has left even one thing to blind chance? O let us recoil from these suggestions of Satan. "Let God be true, and every man a liar" who rails against the truth of the Bible. The dear departed father Beebe was right, and I revere his memory, because he contended for the truth of the predestination of all things. Yes, brethren Beebe, you are right in your course in reference to Elder Rowe. "How can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Why should there be any concord between the children of the light and Belial? How unfortunate for Elder Rowe and his theory that there is no truth in his claim to inspiration; and worse yet for him that the writers of the Bible, who were inspired, did not write on his side of this question. When anybody says that "In answer to prayer God has shown me that he has not appointed, in a sense of decree, any of the wickedness of the world," I know it is as false and blasphemous as the claims of a Swedenborg, a Mahomet, or a J. Smith, to inspiration. He bases his argument upon that promise. But in order to establish his credibility, he must prove beyond a doubt that this pretended or supposed revelation is a reality; and even if he were to prove that it was from God, I would think him another hardened Pharaoh, or one of the class described by Paul, 2 Thessalonians ii. 11, 12. I think he had better pray for forgiveness for having asked amiss.

J. G. W.

FOREST GROVE, Ore., Dec. 16, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having finished the business part of my letter, I feel to add a few more lines, though not to crowd out better matter. There are so many of the dear

saints who are highly favored of God, in that they can and do write to the edification of all those who have been made to know and love the truth, that it seems unnecessary for a poor worm like me to try to add anything to the already well filled list. But somehow that does not keep me from a desire to add a few words now and then. Why is it? I do not feel able to tell anything that has not been told, neither do I feel able to tell it better, or even half as well as other dear brethren and sisters who write. But when a brother or sister tells the very things I have experienced, I want to let them know there is one other who feels to know these things are true. Sometimes, and quite often, too, I am groveling in darkness, can take no comfort in past memories, and can see nothing encouraging ahead. I hear and see, but cannot feel. Surely God will soften my heart, and give light and understanding once more.

Now I wish to say to you all that what I am about to tell is not in a murmuring mood, but to comfort some poor, little one, if there be any like me. When I come to this pass, that I scarcely care what becomes of me, light does not burst suddenly on my understanding, and peace take possession of my heart. O no. My troubled feelings gradually wear off, much as they came on, and by degrees I become satisfied to trust in God, and know that he rules all things according to his good pleasure. He reveals himself dimly to my understanding, because it seems good in his sight, and I would not dare question his wisdom and mercy. I have had a name among the Regular Baptists for about seventeen years; but in all that time I have never had a dream or a vision to which I could attach any special importance. While I have been cognizant of others having such manifestations that I could gladly rejoice with them for the truth's sake, I admit that I have at times felt disposed to deplore the distance in which God seemed to hold me from himself. But more often I wonder that he can tolerate my existence at even a distance, since he knows my every thought. But I can only sum it all up by rejoicing in the knowledge that he knew, long before my individuality in this polluted flesh, just how corrupt and weak this flesh is, made from the ground that he cursed for man's sake; and it was his will that thorns and thistles should be his food all the days of his life. And since I believe that God, in his great wisdom, formed from the same lump of clay vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, I also believe that he has sovereign right to afflict those vessels in whatever way seemeth good to him. The flesh, being made of polluted ground, is a constant thorn to the Spirit dwelling within, and no wonder that we go down into dark vallies and grovel in despair; for when we would do good, evil is pres-

ent. They ought not to expect that peace and love among strangers that rightfully pervades a happy home. A little more sorrow and sighing, and we will have finished our pilgrimage. Then we shall be with Jesus, and no more clouds will intervene. The thorn will have been removed, and all will be peace and joy everlasting.

Brethren Beebe, do with this as you see fit, and it will be all right with me.

The least of all saints, if one at all,  
MRS. J. K. BOYD.

CALEDONIA, Miss., Dec. 26, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied to you and yours, and to all the contributors and readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. If I could by the operation of the Holy Spirit use the endearing name of brethren and sisters in Christ (not out of him), it seems to me that it would smooth the rough paths in my weary pilgrimage in this world of sorrow and death. I am a stranger in a strange land, but journeying, as I hope, to a better country. You are ready to ask how I came here. I answer, There is one only living and true God, who is unlimited in wisdom, power and goodness. This God having power, he executed it in creating the heavens, and the earth, and the seas, and all things in them. He never tried to do anything; for when he spake it was done. He commands, and it stands fast. Then as God has created all things, he has the right to govern and control all things, and does uphold all things by the word of his power, which is included in his counsel, which is his law, and is as immutable as himself. As he said, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6. Now hear him again, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlv. 9, 10. Then, as a Sovereign, he works all things after the counsel of his own will; and there is no uncertainty in anything that he has said, nor in what he has done, nor will there ever be. None can rise up against him, saying, Jehovah, what or why doest thou? for none can stay his hand. Being embraced in God's purpose and counsel, I was developed in time. So when the time came, according to his purpose he brought me into time, took care of me in my infancy, and on until now; and I shall remain until he sees fit to call me hence. Then, and not until then, shall I quit this world of sorrow and pain, which will be when I shall have accomplished my days as an hireling. Then let us sing his praises.

"The God that rules on high,  
And thunders when he please,  
That rides upon the stormy sky,  
And manages the seas:

"That awful God is ours,  
Our Father and our love;  
He will send down his heavenly powers  
To carry us above."

Until then let us, as much as in us is, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, by earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. For "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Rom. viii.

Dear brethren, as the year 1887 is almost gone, I wish you a Happy New Year. I also send my remittance for next year, as I do not wish to be without the SIGNS.

As ever, yours in the faith,

S. C. JOHNSON.

PARSONS, Kansas, Jan. 26, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I thought I would drop a few lines by way of encouragement to you; and if I could, I would write to the family of our God to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage; for that is what it is when they want some of the cardinal truths modified. I believe that to deny the predestination of all things is simply denying the only true God. I am sorry to hear that any who have long walked with the Old Baptists are turning back; but I had rather they would turn back than to have the truth modified and softened to suit their fancies. We read that at one time, when Christ was talking, some said, "This is a hard saying: who can hear it?" And "from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." And he, when he turned to the twelve, asked them, "Will ye also go away?" Peter answered for the twelve, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." So we see that all did not turn back, but some went on with him. I believe that there has been a little flock in all ages that has followed him; and that there is now, and ever will be, a little flock that will look to and depend upon him for all things, both in heaven and on earth. Take away predestination, and the foundation of christians is gone, for they would have nothing sure.

Some say that to admit the predestination of all things would make God the author of sin. I understand that sin is the transgression of the law, or a law. Now, what law is God under? Is there any law outside of himself? I think not. Again, man is a creature, but sin is not a creature; so sin is the act of the creature.

Some say, Why did God make man so that he could sin? But I say, God, thou knowest.

Now, brethren Beebe, what I want to say to you is that I am glad that you are steadfast in the doctrine—what I understand and believe to be the doctrine of the Bible. There seems to have been, and is now, and I believe always will be, a sifting going on in the church of God. I hope that the brethren will do all they can to swell your list with new names, so that the paper may still continue to be published; and that the brethren and sisters who have in the past filled its columns with such rich letters will continue to write to the comfort and edification of the poor, afflicted saints scattered all over the country; and I hope we all may be found contending earnestly for the truth as it is in Jesus.

I remain, as ever, your unworthy brother, I hope,

J. W. FRENCH.

DANSVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 16, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I remember hearing my father talk about the condition of God's people when scattered about among the people of the world, and the effect upon them when gathered together in church capacity. If a brand by any means got separated from the fire, it was very likely to burn out alone, giving no perceptible heat to the atmosphere around it, and likewise the coals being scattered, that fire would die out; but gather the brands and coals together, and the diffusive heat of each individual coal would mingle with that of its neighbor, and the result would be a lively, cheerful fire, communicating warmth and comfort to all around it. The question arises, How long a time will it take for the fire to become wholly extinguished, especially from a single coal or brand? The result in my own case has been a matter of much reflection. If I ever had the fire of God's love in my heart (which I sometimes seriously question), I am, notwithstanding my isolation and coldness, encouraged frequently to hope that the spark yet remains, because of the glowing warmth and cheering comfort experienced while reading the communications and editorials in the SIGNS, or when some remark is made by a friend or neighbor containing the fundamental elements of our faith, or when an enemy of our faith presumes to speak disparagingly of it. You stir a coal with the poker, and if it contains fire it will sparkle. I sometimes sparkle, but I do not know that it warms any one but myself; for in the nearly forty years that I have been here I have only had the comforting warmth and sympathy of transient Old School Baptists. The good old doctrine of predestination and election is unpalatable to my friends and neighbors, and I can derive no satisfaction to my religious feelings from my intercourse with them. My Bible and the SIGNS supply that want, and I try to be

satisfied, leaving all to him in whose hands I am, and by whose rich grace and mercy I am permitted to trust in the merits of his dear Son.

My heart so frequently responds to the sentiments of the editorials, and those pervading the communications in the SIGNS, that I almost involuntarily take my pen to express my approbation and gratification; but I have so little confidence in my ability to do justice, among so many more able writers, that I will content myself with this expression of my satisfaction.

Unworthily yours,

P. WEST.

SPENCERVILLE, Ohio, Jan. 26, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I love the sentiments published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; therefore I will promise (if you see fit to publish it) that any new subscriber sending me one dollar and fifty cents (\$1.50) shall have, in addition to one year's subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, a poetical paraphrase called "The Church Fair," and "The Protestant's Song," and my pamphlet of seventy-eight pages. I do this as a free will offering, to try to extend the circulation of the SIGNS among the brethren and friends. I have twenty-five copies of the pamphlet on "Spiritual Education" to spare for this purpose.

I think this plan will not infringe on the general terms as published, as I shall be to all the trouble of forwarding, &c., and each new subscriber thus obtained will have a twenty-five cent pamphlet on experimental, doctrinal and orderly subjects besides.

Send remittances by registered letter; then each one will have a registry receipt signed by me, and thus avoid the necessity of my sending receipts.

Yours to serve in bonds,

A. B. BREES.

LARGE HYMN BOOK FOR A DOLLAR,  
SIX FOR FOUR DOLLARS AND A HALF.

We have just had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

We also have the small type book bound in cloth, which we will send post paid at price stated above. Cash must always accompany the orders. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish through the SIGNS that I have changed my post office address from Pleasant Valley, Fairfax Co., Va., to Herndon, Fairfax Co., Va., and oblige your brother in hope and fellowship,

A. B. FRANCIS.

## EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., FEBRUARY 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

## THE TWO WITNESSES.

WILL you please give your views on the subject recorded in Revelation xi. 4, 8, and oblige a sister eighty-one years of age on Christmas day?

MARY BROWN.

LEBANON, Ohio, Dec. 24, 1887.

## REPLY.

"THESE are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."—Rev. xi. 4, 8.

It is with much hesitation that we undertake to comply with the request of our aged sister by presenting such limited views as we have on the texts submitted by her in this inquiry. There is doubtless very important truth contained in the record here given by inspiration of God, which is profitable to the saints when they are enabled by the Spirit of Christ to see that truth. But it should never be forgotten that all the things of Jesus are so hidden by the eternal God that no searching can even approach unto the comprehension of them. Hence all those who hope to learn these things by diligent study only manifest their own folly in every effort to attain unto the knowledge of them. We would not try to find by searching the deeply hidden secrets which God has written in the revelation of his grace in our Lord Jesus Christ; but relying alone upon the display of that grace in the testimony of Jesus in our own experience, we would speak only of such things as are thus taught to us, and which are doubtless in perfect accord with the teaching of the same Spirit in all the sons of God, who are led by that Spirit.

In the first place, we wish to state distinctly that nothing which we shall present is intended either to controvert or to confirm any of the theories which have been advanced by those who have written or spoken upon the subject under consideration. We are conscious of our incompetency, even if we had the inclination, to undertake such a discussion. With such ability as shall be afforded us, we desire simply to express some thoughts in connection with the subject, hoping they may not be altogether unprofitable, even though they may fall far short of what might be written by more gifted brethren.

"These are the two olive trees." This is evidently in accord with the truth signified in the vision of Zechariah, as recorded in the fourth chapter of his prophecy. They are there defined by revelation to be the "two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." Under the

shadowy dispensation of prophecy the anointing oil consecrated him upon whom it was poured, signifying that he was set apart to the special service to which he was thus anointed. So these two olive trees, which contribute their golden oil to continually supply the bowl which feeds the seven lamps which are upon the top thereof, are the symbols representing the testimony of the legal and prophetic dispensations as uniting to bear witness to the truth of the grace of God as manifested in the gospel dispensation and in the revelation of the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. As all that is recorded in this book is but the shadow or type of the things signified, it is important to observe the substance, and not mistake the shadow for the reality. The Angel who gave this instruction to John was certainly none other but our Lord Jesus, who is the Angel (or Messenger) of the covenant. The time of the prophesying of the two witnesses, clothed in sackcloth, is just the same period as the time that the holy city shall be trodden under foot by the Gentiles. This seems to indicate that period when the Lord sent his prophets to the nation of Israel and gave them his law, while the Gentiles were not so favored, but during all that time he "suffered all nations to walk in their own ways."

—Acts xiv. 16. In the law and the prophets the Gentiles received no instruction, and to them there was therefore no testimony of Jesus in all the witness borne by them. In the sense of being instructed by the messages which God sent to Israel, the Gentiles throughout that dispensation certainly did tread under foot the holy city, treating all those holy revelations which God gave to Israel as being no more sacred than the vanities which originated in their own vile and polluted imaginations. While there are doubtless other senses in which this typical expression sets forth the testimony of Jesus, it seems at least consistent with the record of divine truth to accept this as one of the senses in which it may be understood. Our Lord himself declared that he was the subject of the whole record of those Scriptures which were committed to the nation of Israel. Even to those whom he knew had not the love of God in them he said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39. The specification of the number of the witnesses as "two" agrees with the requirement of the law of Moses, under which every word of testimony must be established at the mouth of two or three witnesses.—Deut. xix. 15. The certainty of the truth of the declarations of these witnesses is expressed by this specification of their number as that which the law required. This is more important than the mere natural idea of two in number, in confirmation of the testimony borne by these witnesses. The Lord

is not confined to natural numbers in his enumeration of his saints. "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there."—Psalm lxxxvii. 6. In this divine way of counting the glorious Redeemer of Israel embodies in himself all his ransomed people; and while they are all one in him, he also is in each of them, though they are "a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." Their testimony is all given in the one voice of their omnipotent Redeemer, yet it is as perfectly established in truth and certainty of fulfillment as that word by which he declares "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlvi. 10.

There are many very expressive peculiarities in the figure of the "two olive trees," all of which would beautifully illustrate the characteristics of the witnesses of the truth revealed in Jesus. The most apparent is seen in the reference to the prophecy of Zechariah, where they are represented as supplying the golden oil to the lamps on the golden candlestick. They are there declared to be "the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." In this application of the figure the testimony of Jesus as borne by the law and the prophets is represented. These being given by inspiration of God, are well called "anointed ones." As such they are recognized by the inspired apostle, who bears witness that the law is holy, and also applies the same word to the Scriptures.—Rom. vii. 12; 2 Tim. iii. 15. Without this anointing there can be no such thing as witnessing to the truth of revelation. Even our Lord himself claimed this consecration as qualifying him for the proclamation of the glorious gospel.—Isaiah lxi. 1-3. Having this anointing of the Spirit of the Lord God upon him, he was amply prepared for the work of comforting all that mourn. So he could give "the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Another point in the olive tree which is appropriate as descriptive of the testimony of Jesus is that it is emblematic of peace. So the gospel is a proclamation of peace to all who hear its joyful sound. The healing virtue found in its oil clearly expresses the soothing power of the gospel of grace as it is applied to the conscious sinner's heart in the hour of unutterable distress, when hope has fled, and condemnation has been pronounced by divine justice against him. Then with what heavenly sweetness comes the word of Jesus, saying, "Peace and justifying grace I give to you." As his sovereign word calmed the raging waves of the sea of Galilee, so that gracious voice brings life and joy to the perishing sinner. Thus the testimony of Jesus combines peace and comfort for the troubled soul, with health and

strength to them that are afflicted with that worst of all diseases, the pollution of sin.

"And the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." In this expression is signified the permanent provision which has been made by our God for the establishment of his chosen people in the comfort and joy of believing on Jesus as their justifying righteousness in the sight of their eternal Judge. The candlesticks fitly represent the church of the living God in her several dispensations; but in all times and under all circumstances she is standing nowhere else but "before the God of the earth." We are certainly correct in understanding the church to be indicated by the candlesticks, as that explanation is given by him who holds the seven stars in his right hand.—See Rev. i. 20. These golden candlesticks are as much dependent upon the presence of God for their standing as are the olive trees for their fruitfulness. The purity, represented by the gold of which these candlesticks are made, as stated in Revelation i. 12, is wrought in them by the Spirit of Christ which dwells in them. In this way it is shown that all the glory of the church, whether under the legal dispensation or in the liberty of the gospel, is directly to be ascribed to the grace of God revealed in her salvation.

In what is said of these two witnesses in this connection, we would only observe that it is important to remember that all the power they are said to have is not in themselves, but in the word of that God whose witnesses they are. By that power they are kept and protected until "they shall have finished their testimony," when they shall be overcome and killed by "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit." This cannot signify that they are to be so overcome that falsehood shall succeed in destroying truth, nor that the true witnesses of God shall ever be killed in the sense that they shall cease to exist as witnesses. It is indicated in what sense they are to be killed by what is written in the last verse to which our sister refers. They are not put out of sight even in the place where they are killed.

"And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." In this verse there can be no mistake in regard to the city specified; it is the same city "where also our Lord was crucified." It is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. No other city answers to the definite description here given but that great city called Mystery, Babylon. By this city we do not understand the world of those who do not claim any religion. Our Lord was crucified in the most religious city on earth. Indeed it was their religious zeal which moved his persecutors to seek his blood. The city of those who are led by the same blood-thirsty spirit is the place designated where the dead bodies of

these witnesses shall lie in the street. The evident signification of the street in which their dead bodies shall lie is that they shall be kept in sight, as a lifeless corpse, having no power. Is not this now fulfilled in the professedly religious world? The mere carcase, or dead body of the letter of the Scriptures, is kept in public sight, as in the street of the great city of the professedly religious world, while those who will not suffer them to be put in graves, yet give no heed to their testimony. To our understanding this is just the signification of the declaration in this verse. While professing great regard for the dead bodies of the law and the prophets, they deny their testimony; so that these witnesses are really lying dead in the street of that city. The name by which the city is spiritually called is also the right name of the city of false religious profession. In that awfully wicked city are found all the abominations of Sodom and all the bondage of Egypt. It is therefore in the correct language of spiritual judgment called both Sodom and Egypt. This is the city where all the delusions of antichristian religion originate; and it is here that God is denied by the substitution of the commandments of men instead of the living truth of divine revelation. When the measure of iniquity of the carnal Israelites was filled to overflowing, they could reprove the disciples of Jesus for neglecting to observe their traditions, while they were themselves guilty of disobedience to the law of God, which they made void by those traditions. So in the religious world to-day, they who are most zealous for their own traditions are indifferent to the plain teaching of the Lord as recorded in the Scriptures. Thus in their disregard of the testimony of the truth which God has revealed, they acknowledge no life in the witnesses of Jesus; yet they will insist upon keeping their dead bodies in the street of their professed religious organizations, claiming to be guided by the law of Christ, while in works denying his authority. It is only in the street of that great city of religious abominations that these bodies of the two witnesses lie dead. They live in the holy city, New Jerusalem; and there they can never die, for there is no death in that sacred place. There all who are led by the Spirit of God are made free from sin, and consequently death has no dominion over them. To every inhabitant of this favored city of our God the whole testimony of Jesus is the living word of the Lord which endureth forever. This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto all who hear the voice of the Son of God.

While deeply conscious of our incompetency to speak of all that is contained in this text and the connection, we have tried to comply with the desire of our aged sister by giving a brief statement of such views as we have upon the subject of her inquiry. That there is an infinite

fullness of instruction contained in the subject, beyond all that has been written, we are well aware. Doubtless to many of our readers that fullness is revealed much more clearly than to us. We shall be glad to receive such views as any of our brethren may feel inclined to contribute for the further elucidation of the texts upon which our sister wishes light. We have not felt at liberty to resort to the ingeniously devised commentaries of theologians who construe literally the figurative expressions by which the apostle was moved to record the wonderful things which were by the angel of Jesus Christ signified to his servant John. No wisdom of man can ever find out those deep mysteries which God has thus hidden. They are known only by the revelation of that Spirit of truth who takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto his saints in their individual experience; and as they were revealed to the unlearned fisherman John, so they are still made known unto babes in natural knowledge. By the grace of God alone can any man receive the divine testimony of truth. So far as what is here written is in harmony with that revelation which the saints have received of God, it is worthy of consideration. May every reader try it by the standard of truth, and receive it only as it is thereby approved; for nothing else can be profitable to the pilgrims and strangers who seek for that truth which is the only sure ground of the hope of them who believe in Jesus.

SPECIAL OFFER.

PARTIALLY to repay our subscribers for their time and trouble, in procuring for us new subscribers, we will from now until April first, 1888, make the following offer in CASH PREMIUMS.

To any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars; we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

We have received a good many new subscribers since these terms were first published, and we hope the brethren who indorse the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS will feel a personal interest in aiding in the increase of its circulation.

These terms, brethren, are really below what we can afford; but if by this means we shall double our subscription list, and by a little effort on the part of our subscribers it can be done, we will then lower our subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents per year, and run the single sheet of eight pages weekly. Let each subscriber see what he can do.

MARRIAGES.

At the house of the bride's father, Mr. Wm. Rittenhouse, in Stockton, on Nov. 16, 1887, by Elder B. Bundy, Mr. John W. Bellis, of Baptistown, and Miss Lizzie Rittenhouse, of Stockton, all of New Jersey.

At the old homestead of Mr. J. G. Steers, Fairburg, Livingston Co., Ill., on Jan. 11, 1888, by Elder W. A. Thompson, Mr. John E. Masterson, and Miss Minnie E. Steers.

On January 25, 1888, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, at his residence, Mr. John S. Cray and Miss Laura B. Blackwell, both of Hopewell, N. J.

On January 25, 1888, by the same, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. John M. Ege and Miss Rosa E. Drake, both of Hopewell, N. J.

On January 28, 1888, by the same, at the residence of the bride's son-in-law, Mr. Cato H. Molton, of Franklin Park, and Mrs. Elizabeth S. Bergen, of Montgomery, both of N. J.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

WITH sorrow I announce the death of our dear mother, **Mary Slack**, who departed this life June 22, 1887, in the seventy-seventh year of her age. She was buried at old Southampton burying-ground. She was a great sufferer from rheumatic pains for several years, but did not often murmur or complain, feeling it was all right whatever was put on her to bear. Only a short time before she died she remarked that death had no terrors for her, that she had no fear; she was ready and willing at any time whenever it was God's will to call her from earth. She loved to hear the gospel preached. I heard her say frequently of late that she would like to go to meeting and hear a sermon, but she was not able on account of her bodily affliction. She was compelled to stay mostly at home. She loved to read the Bible, or hear it read, and she also loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. While Elder Durand was writing on the subject of "Unto what and unto whom the saints have come," her mind was very much exercised. She seemed anxious to hear and know more about it. She was sick but a short time, and passed away as one going to sleep. I sat by her bedside, and as her breath grew shorter and shorter I felt as though it was not death to die, but merely to fall asleep. Such a calm and peaceful feeling came over me such as the world can neither give nor take away, causing me to say,

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,  
From which none ever wake to weep."

It came with such power that my soul was exalted. Although trials and troubles beset me on every side, yet I may be enabled to say, Thy will be done, O Lord. Were it not for the sweet hope we have of a brighter inheritance beyond this vale of sorrow, sin and pain we should despair. Words fail to express our sadness of heart as we realize how we miss her presence. She was a true and faithful companion to father, a kind and indulgent mother, and highly esteemed by her relatives and friends. None knew her but to love her. When dear friends would die she would remark that they had filled their mission and gone to a better land, which I hope and trust is true of her. She never made an open confession of religion, but I have an evidence that she had a hope beyond the grave. Mother was a firm believer in predestination of all things. She remarked to me one day that she had not strength to go before a church, but she had a desire, she believed, that all things should be as God had ordained them. She felt a great deal of interest for the church at Southampton.

Elder Durand preached her funeral sermon from John xi. 24-26, which was very comforting to me. He spoke on the resurrection, "Though he were dead, yet shall he live." He spoke beautifully on that point. I felt lifted above on wings of love.

REBECCA S. YERKES.  
PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Dec. 21, 1887.

My aged father, Elder Lewis Seitz, requests me to send you for publication the obituary of his last surviving sister, **Rebecca Freisner**, who departed this life Sept. 28, 1887, at the age of eighty years, five months and ten days. Our aunt and sister was one of a family of fourteen children (seven brothers and seven sisters), all of which at an advanced age had gone before to the spirit world, save her surviving brother, Elder L. Seitz. Between the years 1835 and 1840, she was baptized in the fellowship of Pleasant Run Church, Fairfield Co., Ohio. She had been married to Henry Freisner in 1825, in the above (her native) county. She was the mother of fourteen children, most of whom, with her husband, preceded her to the grave. She was a widow over thirty years, and was noted for her kindness, care and good judgment as a mother. Hence her family never lacked for the common comforts of life. As a member of the church of our choice, she continued until called to the church triumphant. In her last illness she assured her friends that her faith in the salvation of the Lord was as strong as when she first believed. Her death occurred in Shelby County, Illinois, where she had resided for many years.

Thus one by one our Master calls to his loved ones, Child, come home; away from the cares and trials of earth, to an endless life of joy and peace.

JOHN SEITZ.

TIFFIN, Ohio.

DIED—At his residence, near Newberg, Yam Hill County, Oregon, Dec. 5, 1887, of typhoid pneumonia, **C. W. Tolson**, aged about forty-two years.

The above subject was a firm and uncompromising Old School Baptist. He united with the New Hope Church, Washington County, Oregon, December, 1876, and was baptized the following January, together with his wife. His wife died Dec. 22, 1881, and brother Tolson never seemed himself after this bereavement. He was left with six little children, the youngest one being scalded to death a few months after its mother's death. In August, 1885, brother Tolson was united in wedlock to Miss Lauréttia Beal. In October, 1886, he was excluded from the fellowship of the church. We have reason to believe he sadly deplored his disorderly walk; but he never visited the church after his exclusion, nor indeed for a year or more preceding that event. He repeatedly said he did not blame the church, but thought she was amiss in duty for not dealing with him sooner. On his death bed his mind was greatly exercised religiously, and he gloried in the doctrine of absolute predestination. His trust was in God, and he died at peace with all mankind. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

MRS. J. K. BOYD.

FOREST GROVE, Oregon.

**Mazia Ross**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. Ross, of Pickaway County, Ohio, was born Oct. 13, 1869, and died Jan. 10, 1888, aged eighteen years, three months and twenty-seven days. Mazia was a kind and affectionate daughter, loved by all who knew her. Grandfather, grandmother and mother, all have belonged to the Union Church, Old School Baptists, for years. She gave her friends evidence that she had received a hope in Christ Jesus, and the reading of his blessed promises was her chief delight in her declining months. She was afflicted with

that dreadful disease, consumption, which gradually wore her body away. She was often heard singing when alone, "Nearer, my God, to thee," and "All is well," with faint and feeble voice. We believe that she has been translated out of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And from that there is no separation. Once in grace always in grace.

Her funeral was largely attended at the Ebenezer Church, where her remains were laid away to await the morning of the resurrection. The writer tried to comfort the mourners and friends from John xiv. 1-3.

R. W. PETERS.

On the first of December, 1887, in the person of Susan Harriet Carnell, the people of Cold Water, Ky., lost one of their best ladies. She was the wife of J. A. Carnell, and daughter of Zedoc and Jean Duncan. Was born in Humphreys County, Tenn., Nov. 31, 1842. She received a hope in the blessed Savior in the early part of her life; and while she never united with any church, she was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and her walk and conversation was such as would portray the character of a humble christian. She was much delighted with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which she constantly read. I have been personally acquainted with Mrs. Carnell from my childhood, and can say that her entire life was a continual display of pure christian character. She was ever ready to give a helping hand to the needy, to visit the sick and afflicted, to speak a word of comfort to the distressed and down-hearted, to visit the inmates of homes made wretched by the messenger of death, and with her mild disposition, kind words and pleasant countenance afford them comfort and consolation. We can but know that she will be greatly mourned by all that knew her, but more especially by her bereaved husband and six motherless children; but our mourning is intermingled with that delightful thought that she, in spirit, is resting in the "sweet by and by." I may say to the children, The example of your mother is well worthy of your walking after, and should live in your hearts as a monument erected to her memory forever.

J. V. KIRKLAND.

Elder Jehu Byrnside departed this mortal life at ten o'clock p. m., January 18, 1888. He passed away like one falling asleep. He was taken sick on the first day of September last. He was confined to his bed all the time, and had his mind until the last. I have known him for the last twenty years, and he always preached the doctrine of salvation by grace, contending against all the isms of the day. He was not discouraged because of his trials, and said that God would overrule them all for good. He was an able minister, and stood fair among other associations as well as our own. He leaves a wife and five children to mourn their loss, which is his eternal gain. The last verse he repeated was,

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wishful eye  
To Canaan's fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie."

He said, Where I hope my possessions lie.  
A. B. SMITH.  
GRIFFITHSVILLE, Lincoln Co., W. Va.

DIED—January 18, 1888, in Delmar, Sussex Co., Del., Walter L. Hastings, youngest child of Leven and Olivia Hastings, aged nine months and twenty days. Brother and sister Hastings have had to suffer several severe trials in their family circle. This is the third son they have been called upon to part with, leaving them one son and two daughters. A severe cold, developing in spinal affection and brain fever, commenced on Nov. 25th, ending in death. The bereaved parents

will have the sympathies of their numerous friends in their repeated strokes of affliction. The king of terrors never assumes a more terrific form than when he snatches the tender infant from the mother's breast. May the Lord comfort them.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

STATE ROAD, Del.

DIED—In Alexandria, Va., January 28, sister ~~Edith~~ ~~Bramwell~~, in the sixty-seventh year of her age. The deceased had been sick for a considerable time, bearing her affliction with christian patience and resignation to the divine will. She was baptized in the fellowship of the church in Alexandria, Nov. 6, 1861. She was a consistent member of the church, filling her seat regularly at our stated meetings, an humble follower of the dear Redeemer. The deceased leaves her husband and other relatives with the church of her membership to mourn her death, but in hope of blissful immortality in realms of perpetual rest.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCOQUAN, Va., Feb. 7, 1888.

MY beloved wife, Mary E. Chandler, died December 27, 1887. Her disease was rheumatism, from which she suffered greatly, but bore it with patience, and died with a sweet smile on her face. I believe she is gone to rest, and those who knew her say the same. She was a good wife, mother and neighbor. She was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist doctrine, and was always anxious to receive and read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

She has left me with four small children and many good friends to mourn her absence.

JOSEPH CHANDLER.

JAMISON, Ala.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1888.

NO. 5.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### INFANT SALVATION.

THE holy Scriptures alone furnish the only true record of the way of salvation (2 Tim. iii. 15), and this record is only understood and experienced by the revelation of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. ii. 12-16) in the hearts of God's people (Deut. xxxii. 9), the election of grace.—Rom. xi. 5, 6. The theme of salvation, to the believer, is exceedingly precious, and the evidence of God's salvation tasted and felt in the soul by the power of the Holy Spirit is what he longs to be favored with while in this tabernacle.

The subject of infant salvation, of those dying in infancy, has exercised the minds of many, and has resulted in many methods being devised, promulgated and believed by those who are accounted by the world to be christians. Even among those who are manifestly the dear people of God there are some who, if the subject be mentioned, speak with considerable hesitation, and express themselves in effect as though there is nothing definitely and satisfactorily revealed concerning those who die in infancy. Some others, having no offspring of their own, or if they have, have never been bereaved of them, treat the subject with cold indifference; but there are christian parents who have had their babes and children taken away by death, whose hearts feel many a pang in being bereaved of their loved ones, and who are much tried in their minds with anxious questionings arising concerning their eternal welfare. "Is it well with my child? Is my darling in heaven?" With my heart, as I hope, sincerely looking to the Lord for his direction and blessing, I desire to be able to pen such things as shall be for their comfort.

In discussing the subject of infant salvation, it will not do to take comfort in a "refuge of lies."—Isaiah xxviii. 17. No, it is the truth that they who are of the truth, and in whom the truth dwells, desire to know. This they would buy, but never sell.—Prov. xxiii. 23. Let us first look at the beliefs of the so-called christian world, and see what subtuges those who have not the truth have been driven to resort to; and then let us together search the Scriptures and see if there is a sure foundation to believe in the salvation of those dying in childhood.

The most of professed christian denominations in some way or other admit that infants need salvation;

and being ignorant of God's way of salvation, they have come to the conclusion that it is of necessity that something be done for them, and have hit upon an invention that suits them well; that is infant sprinkling. Mark the teaching in the following quotations. Here is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, the mother of this invention, taken from their Catechism:

"Question. What is baptism?"

"Answer. A sacrament which cleanses from original sin, makes us christians, and children of God, and heirs to the kingdom of heaven."

"Q. Does baptism also remit the actual sins committed before it?"

"A. Yes; and all the punishments due to them."

"Q. Is baptism necessary to salvation?"

"A. Yes; without it one cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

"Q. Who are appointed by Christ to give baptism?"

"A. The pastors of his church; but in case of necessity any layman or woman can give it."

"Q. How is baptism given?"

"A. By pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, saying at the same time, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

"Q. What did we promise in baptism?"

"A. To renounce the devil, with all his works and pomps."

In the church of England Prayer Book we find the following teaching. In "The ministration of the public baptism of infants," the priest is instructed, after he has sprinkled the child, to say, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock." Also, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church, let us give thanks unto almighty God for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning." Then, as prayer, the priest says, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church. And humbly we beseech thee to grant that he, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin, and that, as he is made partaker of the

death of thy Son, he may also be partaker of his resurrection; so that finally, with all the residue of thy holy church, he may be an inheritor of thine everlasting kingdom, through Christ our Lord. Amen." Then, as a foot note, the following, "It is certain, by God's word, that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved." In after years, in order to be confirmed in such blasphemous lies, the following instruction is to be "learned and believed" by those who were sprinkled in their infancy.

"Q. What is your name?"

"Q. Who gave you this name?"

"A. My godfathers and godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

"Q. What did your godfathers and godmothers then for you?"

"A. They did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the christian faith. And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life."

The Presbyterian Church in their "Shorter Catechism," says, "Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized." And in their "Directory for the public worship of God," they declare "That the promise is made to believers and their seed, and that the seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the church, have, by their birth, interest in the covenant, and right to the seal of it, and to the outward privileges of the church, under the gospel, no less than the children of Abraham in the time of the Old Testament; the covenant of grace, for substance, being the same, and the grace of God, and the consolation of believers, more plentiful than before. That the Son of God admitted little children into his presence, embracing and blessing

them, saying, 'For of such is the kingdom of God.' That children, by baptism, are solemnly received into the bosom of the visible church, distinguished from the world and them that are without, and united with believers; and that all who are baptized in the name of Christ, do renounce, and by their baptism are bound to fight against, the devil, the world and the flesh. That they are christians, and federally holy before baptism, and therefore are they baptized."

This certainly is an exhibition of carnal sophistry, a sad perversion of the Scriptures of truth. They also declare that in this invention, infant sprinkling, "the covenant is thereby sealed betwixt God and their souls." And that by children being born of believing parents, and being sprinkled, that thereby God doth provide for "the continuance and increase of his church."

How utterly antagonistic to the teaching of the Scriptures are these things, who certainly are the true interpreters of what is the antitypical, spiritual signification of the covenant of circumcision that God made with Abraham. This covenant did not seal to Abraham's natural, fleshly seed "the benefits of the covenant of grace." Did not Christ say to some who boasted that they were Abraham's children, "Ye are of your father the devil?" The covenant of circumcision which Jehovah made with Abraham did not bestow any spiritual benefits upon his offspring according to the flesh, and did not seal their "ingrafting into Christ." No such things were promised therein. But it was given to Abraham personally, "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised: that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised: for the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not, to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."—Rom. iv. 11-13. Outward circumcision availeth nothing, but was given to a typical people, and had a typical signification.—See Rom. ii. 28, 29. "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one

inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."—Rom. ii. 28, 29. See also Phil. iii. 3; Col. ii. 11. The apostle Paul, in Galatians iii. 16, says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to *thy seed, which is Christ.*" He was the seed that should come, to whom the promise was made. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."—Verses 19–29. And instead of being born in the church by believing parents, and as the offspring of such "ingrafted into Christ," and thereby "christians," the Scriptures positively declare that those to whom power is given to become the sons of God are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. It will advantage one nothing to say, "We have Abraham to our father."—Matt. iii. 9. "We were born of believing parents." This is a delusive, lying title to "the benefits of the covenant of grace." The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of the apostle Peter, did indeed say, "The promise is unto you, and to your children."—Acts ii. 39. For these that were now "pricked in their heart" had said of Jesus, "His blood be on us, and on our children."—Matt. xxvii. 25. But do these words from the mouth of Peter ~~of the fleshly offspring~~ of believers to be by their birth "christians, engrafted into Christ, and entitled to the benefits of the covenant of grace?" No indeed! He preached no such doctrine, but declared, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" The election of grace, the called of God, these are the heirs of promise.

"The Methodist Book of Discipline" says, "Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of christian men's profession, but rather they are *certain signs of grace and God's good will toward us*, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and does not only quicken, but also strengthen and comfort our faith in him." "Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized, but is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church. We hold that all children, by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the atonement, are members of the kingdom of God, and therefore graciously entitled to baptism."

What shall we say to all this? Is it not a sad picture of apostasy from the doctrine of Christ, and those things which the church of Christ was commanded to observe?—Matt. xxviii. 18–20; Acts i. 3. What warrant, what scriptural authority, have they for such doctrines and

practices? No other comment need be made here, than it is evident that the teachings and practices set forth in the preceding quotations upon the subject of the salvation of infants is an unmistakable sign of antichrist, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.—2 Thess. ii. 9. It has been presented as an obstacle to, or casting doubt upon, the salvation of those dying in childhood, that God rained down fire and brimstone and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their inhabitants: that they "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."—Jude 7. Who said that infants perished in this overthrow? The crimes of these cities were such that the probability is they had no offspring. Again, some have said, "Did not the Lord command the Israelites to destroy the nations of Canaan, and even the babes and the little ones were to be slain?" "Also, in the chastening of the children of Israel, many of their babes and children were destined to be dashed to pieces by those whom the Lord raised up to chasten his people." Is this a valid objection to the salvation of infants? As well might it be raised against many adults of God's elect who have died in war, or by sudden and (as we say) violent deaths. They have been tortured, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, stoned to death, crucified, and burned at the stake. Able ~~handicrafts~~ of the New Testament have fallen down dead while preaching the everlasting gospel. But what of all this? Is it an evident token of the perdition of such? How foolish! Has not Jehovah predestinated the time and manner of death of all?—Eccl. iii. 2; Job vii. 1–14. The Son of God told Peter what manner of death he should die.—2 Peter i. 14, 15; John xxi. 18. But we will not discuss this objection any farther at present, but an instance of its utter refutation we shall show before we are through with this subject.

In the religious world there are those who assert that Christ atoned for the original sin of all the human race, and upon this ground all who die in infancy are saved. We might ask, Where is the proof in the holy Scriptures for such an assertion? and in the absence of it, dismiss any discussion upon the subject. But, dear children of God, we know that Jehovah declares that "For the transgressions of my people was he stricken." Christ bore their sins. He was made sin for them. Aaron, as a type under the law, made atonement for all who were named in him.—Exodus xxviii. 29. So Christ redeemed, with his own blood, the whole family of the elect of God, out of all nations, kindreds, people and tongues, whose names are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Jesus "shall save his people from their sins."

We also find in the world those

who speak of children arriving at "the age of accountability;" "attaining the years of discretion;" and that infants and little children dying before this age are taken to heaven. This is a gross error, for it denies the Bible doctrine of the evident accountability of all mankind in Adam for the one offense, by which the judgment was to condemnation, and by which death reigns.—Rom. v. 15–19. "Salvation is of the Lord."—Jonah ii. 9. It is a work utterly impossible with men.—Matt. xix. 25, 26. And it is none the less so with an infant of days. The salvation of sinners has its foundation, its origin, in the eternal, immutable will of Jehovah, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9. "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. iii. 11. The Lord elected his people in Christ Jesus, blessed them with all spiritual blessings, gave them eternal life, loved them with an everlasting love, and in his eternal delight in them in Christ Jesus he had predestinated them to the adoption of children, to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. And in him God hath predestinated them to an inheritance of eternal glory. The offspring of Adam thus loved, and chosen, and predestinated by the everlasting God, are saved and redeemed in the atoning blood of the Word, who was made flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ, and are called, quickened, regenerated, born again, by the sovereign, immediate and effectual work of God the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, according to the eternal purpose, and to the invincible, reigning grace of God. They are preserved unto eternal happiness by the power and grace of God, and shall be raised in the resurrection at the last day in the likeness of their dear Redeemer. They shall live and reign in eternal glory with their Immanuel. In a few words, it is all summed up by the Holy Ghost in the language of the apostle Paul, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. viii. 28, to the end of the chapter. O how exceedingly precious! Can it be that I, a poor, vile sinner, am blessed with such "a good hope through grace?"

As there is no other salvation than that which is treasured up in Christ Jesus, and testified of in the Scrip-

tures, it is evident that if those who die in infancy are partakers of salvation, they must be saved in this one and only way. Let us now search the Scriptures to see if there is good ground to hope that infants and little children are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. Do babes and sucklings need salvation? A fond mother, looking upon her precious, darling babe as it nestles in her bosom, would naturally scarcely see the needs be; and in common language how oft is the expression used, "The innocent babe." There are religionists who deny that all have sinned in Adam, and maintain that we are sinners only by imitation, by following the example of Adam; that infants are holy, and dying in infancy enter heaven upon the ground of their innocency. Certain Scriptures are called into requisition, and perverted, to sustain this delusion. In Psalm cvi. 37, 38, it is recorded, "Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood." And in Jer. ii. 34, "Also, in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents."—2 Kings xxi. 16. Does this mean that these children were sinless by nature in the sight of God? No indeed, as we shall show. But as they had committed no crimes against the laws of man worthy of death, the shedding of their blood in sacrifice to devils was murder. This is instanced in the case of the death of Jesus, the Son of God. He had done no violence; he had not transgressed the law of Moses, nor the laws of the Romans, that he should be crucified; but "in his humiliation his judgment was taken away." Pilate declared, "I find in him no fault at all." And thinking to calm his conscience, he "took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children." And Judas Iscariot, in the depths of his remorse, cried out, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." They were the betrayers and murderers of the just One. Nevertheless, "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Another portion of the word of God which is handled deceitfully, to sustain the theory of the sinlessness of infants, is 1 Corinthians vii. 14. It is evident that the apostle in this passage is declaring the indestructible nature of the marriage relation between husband and wife while they live (Rom. vii. 2), and establishing the legality of the marriage tie of those who were joined together in wedlock before being called by grace. But if the believing husband or wife were to depart from their unbelieving companion, it would be to say

that their relations one with another were illegal, and would be judging their offspring to be unclean (illegitimate); but "now are they holy" (legitimate); and we believe and are sure that this Scripture in no wise teaches that the children of believers are sinless in the sight of God; for this would contradict the clear testimony of other portions of the Scriptures. Even an indulgent, loving mother discerns, perhaps before her babe is many weeks or months old, that there are indications not simply arising from pain or sickness, but evidences of the inherent malady, sin. The affectionate mother who has in her heart to acknowledge this, is not mistaken; for the testimony of the Scriptures is that the entire offspring of Adam are by nature totally depraved; that all the human race have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God; that in the first man, Adam, all have sinned, and are under the righteous judgment of God to condemnation. David says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalm li. 5. Saith the Lord, "I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and was called a transgressor from the womb."—Isa. xlvi. 6. "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."—Psalm lviii. 3. Well may Job, in exact harmony with this doctrine, ask a question, and himself answer, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."—Job xiv. 4. In the types under the law, sacrifice of a sin offering was appointed for purification.—Leviticus xii. It is also beyond successful contradiction that since babes and sucklings die, and death is by sin, therefore infants cannot be sinless, or they would not be subject to death; for it is sin, when it is finished, that bringeth forth death.—James i. 15. It is sin that reigns unto death.—Rom. v. 21. "The wages of sin is death."—Rom. vi. 21-23. This is the scriptural account of the condition of all mankind by nature, children of wrath, dead in trespasses and sins.—Eph. ii. 1-4. If heaven be by works, can an infant find an entrance there? If the theory of "conditional salvation" be true, if salvation is by the creature performing conditions of salvation, what hope is there then for babes and sucklings and little children? We have seen that men in order to carry out such doctrines, to supply the evident deficiency in the case of those dying in infancy, have been driven to invent such unscriptural, antichristian expedients as sponsors, godfathers and godmothers, infant sprinkling, and all the attendant "wonderful works" (Matt. vii. 22), "lying wonders" (2 Thess. ii. 9), such as being made a christian, a child of God, a member of Christ, sealing the engrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, regenerated, quickened, born again; all of which is said to be wrought and

sealed to such infants as are sprinkled with water by those who profess to be the ministers of Christ, while repeating the words, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." O what a mercy to be delivered from fellowshiping and practicing such blasphemous delusions.

FRED. W. KEENE.

(To be continued.)

OCOQUAN, Va., Jan. 25, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have read the communication of Elder S. H. Durand in the last received number of the SIGNS, in which two questions are considered. Elder Durand's answer to the first of these questions is an argument to prove that the Adamic or natural man is born of the Spirit of God. The subject considered is one of great importance to saints, and I am constrained to offer some remarks in reference to it.

I desire to state first that I am unable to agree with Elder Durand in his view, as expressed in the communication referred to. I have read his argument in support of the position assumed, and have not been able to see its consistency, nor is it sustained, in my understanding, by his quotations from the oracles of eternal truth. The Scriptures inform us, and Elder Durand quotes the words of the dear Redeemer, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Then if the natural man is born of the Spirit, he must be spirit, is the inevitable conclusion. But Elder D. informs us that while the natural man is born of the Spirit, his nature is unchanged. This appears to me extremely inconsistent. To my mind it is a far more consistent position to assume that such a birth will change him "from the love of sin to the love of holiness." But Elder D. states, "The use of the word 'that' in this sentence ["that" which is born of the flesh, and "that" which is born of the Spirit], rather than the personal pronoun 'he,' shows that the two natures now existing in him who has been born again are referred to, and not two separate children." I read these remarks with some surprise. If "that which is born of the Spirit" simply develops a spiritual nature, and not a spiritual child, how far short of the spiritual child is the spiritual nature, and when does that nature become a child? In short, what is the difference between the two? I can see none. The Scripture speaks of the "old man" and the "new man," the "outward man" and the "inward man;" the one born of the flesh and the other of the Spirit; the first bearing the image of the earthly, the last bearing the image of the heavenly. The birth of the one develops an earthly generation, the birth of the other a spiritual generation. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 48. It is as absolutely needful that the

spiritual man should have had an existence in Christ before the world began, as it is that the natural man should have his existence in Adam in the natural creation. The spiritual birth develops the pre-existent spiritual life. I am at a loss to understand how the natural can be born of the spiritual. If the natural man is born of the Spirit, what becomes of the doctrine of adoption? What man is adopted? Again, we read in Elder Durand's communication, "The Savior did not say, He who is born again is spirit; neither did the apostle say, He who is born again sinneth not." I have understood that this was exactly what the Savior did say. If the second or again birth is, as Elder Durand acknowledges, a spiritual birth, how can it possibly produce anything but spirit? If the man "born again" is not spiritual in that birth, how can he become so? In explanation of his understanding of the apostle's meaning in the last quoted expression, Elder Durand uses the following language, "The apostle, after speaking of a brother (a child of God) who may sin, immediately says, 'We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not;' clearly designating that new man, that divine nature which is in him who has been born again." The distinction is here drawn, if I correctly understand Elder D.'s position, between the man born again and the man born of God. This opens a wide field upon which I hesitate to enter. I have no desire to engage in a controversy upon what is commonly termed the "new birth." If the again birth is a spiritual one, and not natural, as Nicodemus supposed, how can that birth produce a being of two distinct and antagonistic natures, the one fleshly, the other spiritual? If the birth again is a spiritual birth, from whence cometh it but from God? They are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. Begotten "again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."—Verse 3. Truly they are the "children of the regeneration." The Scriptures do abundantly teach, and our experience also testifies, that the christian (the New Testament name for a disciple—Acts xi. 26) is composed of two distinct and antagonistic natures. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. Elder Durand's remarks upon the experience of the christian warfare I can heartily indorse. It is his view of the doctrine underlying that experience to which I object. If his view is correct, I am at a loss to understand how there can be a warfare. I do not understand that our natural mind is ever engaged, as

Elder D. asserts, in heavenly themes. The natural mind, called in Romans the carnal mind, we are told is "enmity against God," "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—Rom. viii. 7. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."—Verse 6. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John iv. 24. Paul says, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son."—Rom. i. 9. In what sense then can the natural mind enter into such sacred worship, especially when it is admitted that the carnal enmity is unchanged? True, there are times when in a blaze of light eternal the christian loses sight of his unchanged nature for a moment; but how soon he finds that the old man is still there—the Canaanite is yet in the land. Paul speaks of being carnally minded, and also spiritually minded. Will any one claim that it is the same mind, which is sometimes carnal and sometimes spiritual? In other words, that the natural mind is changed into a spiritual mind, and the spiritual mind into a natural mind, the one mind susceptible of changing its nature and becoming the one or the other? Will you pardon me for saying that such a position as this would be very much like Leland's wonderful chameleon. I desire, however, to distinctly disclaim any use for the inference sometimes drawn in reference to the view of the subject which I present. Some claim that we preach that the new man may be engaged in holy worship, while the old man is engaged in sin. I know of no minister or church that believes in such folly. Where is the testimony of a spiritual birth aside from the fruit it bears? "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have?"—1 Cor. vi. 19. "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."—Eph. iv. 30. We are not responsible for such mistaken deductions from what we understand to be the testimony of eternal truth. It is the truth of God in a mystery. I would not dare even attempt to explain the wonderful mystery. Paul, in the seventh chapter of the letter to the Romans, refers to his own experience in the following language, "If then I do that which I would not."—Verse 16. "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."—Verse 19. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."—Verse 25. This could not be the natural mind, nor could the word "flesh" have reference simply to the corporeal body. I engaged in doing the things that I would not. Wonderful mystery, realized in the daily experience of saints. "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope;

because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 20-23. Listen to the language, "We ourselves groan within ourselves."

In reference to the second question discussed by Elder Durand, I am not certain that I clearly understand his position, especially when I find him quoting from Mr. Philpot and indorsing the following language, "All the saints and servants of God do not agree with me on this point; but my own view and belief is that the church was espoused to Christ not as a fallen, but as an unfallen bride." "Now I gather from these two striking types that our gracious Lord took the church unfallen, not without a foreview of the fall, or of what he would suffer for her, and of her one day being washed in his blood and clothed in his righteousness. But primarily he accepted her unfallen."

This certainly looks like an election of something more than sinners of Adam's race. Mr. Philpot speaks of an elect bride existing in Christ before the world began, and in eternal, vital union with him. Adam is spoken of as "the figure of him that was to come."—Romans v. 14. Eve was certainly created in him. In reference to her Adam says, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh."—Gen. ii. 23. If we regard this as a figure, we must look for an elect church in the Lord Jesus Christ before the world began, when he "was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."—Prov. viii. 23. The body, "which is the fullness of him that filleth all in all," was elected in the election of the Head. "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16. I ask, in all candor, Can there be an elect, spiritual Head to a fleshly or natural body? "There is," says Paul, "a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."—1 Cor. xv. 44. In that "book of the generation of Jesus Christ" he asserts, "All my members were written." Not certainly with an earthly pen, nor yet in earthly forms, but in actual oneness with him in the bosom of the Father before the world began. But some seem fearful lest the sinner should be left out of the great way of salvation. Such a thing is utterly impossible without changing the whole volume of inspiration. There can be no salvation, no redemption, without a sinner. The fall of Adam

was not mere chance. He was, most certainly, not made "able to stand, but liable to fall."

"When man was created  
What wisdom we see;  
The whole he possessed was  
The image of thee.  
But O! in his fall we  
Are led to espy,  
'Twas all for the lifting  
Of Jesus on high."

It was the language of prophecy, heard from the lips of the great Creator, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."—Gen. ii. 17. Nothing short of the "absolute predestination of God in all things" will do for Bible truth. Back of all worlds and ages he sits enthroned in regal splendor, taking counsel with none, "declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlvi. 10. The eternal way of salvation, lifting high the precious Savior, from of old, from everlasting, "or ever the earth was," must have embraced or comprehended in eternal, irrevocable decree the entrance of sin, the fall of Adam, with all events and incidents, however large or small they seem to us to be, that darken or brighten the pathway of time. The terrible sufferings of the blessed Redeemer were for the salvation of lost and helpless sinners. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15. They were astray upon the dreary mountains, and in the waste howling wilderness of sin, in a dark and terrible day. "I will," says the great Shepherd, "bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land." "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick."—Ezekiel xxxiv. Here is certainly gospel comfort for poor, helpless sinners. When the long, legal night was over, and the glorious day had come, "good tidings of great joy" rang out from "the great white throne," for the "poor in spirit," for the mourning captive, for the hungry, thirsty one. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," he says, "because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."—Luke iv. 18, 19. Here again we find comfort for poor sinners. As before stated, I can heartily indorse Elder Durand's reference to the experience of the christian warfare. These children of the living God, partakers of an earthly

nature, poor and helpless sinners in their earthly standing, cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he "delivered them out of their distresses." They groan, being heavily burdened, and long for deliverance from "the body of this death," this "bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." To them this world is a vast wilderness of woe, brightened with some precious resting places, where they have been brought to the banqueting house of the great King, and "his banner over me was love." But the weary, heavy laden child longs for the heavenly home—for the lifting of the eternal curtains, where he shall find unending rest. Storms have beaten upon his pathway, darkness thick as beamless night has settled upon his earthly tabernacle; but hope, as "an anchor of the soul," holds him fast in the way of eternal truth. The truth of the gospel of the grace of God is the beacon light upon the eternal mountains, our everlasting guide, the lamp unto our feet. We are in the midst of fearful times. The world is shaken in wild commotion. Rumors of wars, swellings, and tumults like mighty earthquakes, shake its social and political life. Can we as a people expect to escape, to feel none of the mighty conflicts which tell of the dissolution of all mortal powers, of the coming of the "great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ?" "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?"—Mal. iii. 2. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"—Psa. xi. 3. But we rest in the precious assurance that this can never be. The foundations will stand. We dwell in the Gibraltar of gospel truth, the unshaken Rock of eternal ages. "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early."—Psalm xvi. 2-5. Rest, weary child, in this precious truth. Let mortality record the lesson of human helplessness and sin, while the vain, boasting nations of earth crumble under the withering touch of time; but be it ours to rest in the arms of our God, to trust "in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."—Isa. xxvi. 4.

I have written, I hope, in no spirit of harshness toward any one, but in the love of the truth. These are great and important things. Far be it from me to attempt to force my views upon any one; and I claim the same treatment at the hands of my brethren. The important thing with us is to know the truth. Truth will bear the closest scrutiny. The Scrip-

tures contain the infallible rule by which every point of doctrine and order is measured. In the light of divine revelation traditions of a year or of centuries amount to nothing. "To the law and to the testimony" is the ultimatum from the throne. The infallible standard of divine revelation has measured the church in every age. The sacred Scriptures reveal her only true and proper history. There we find the indelible doctrinal marks by which she shall be known in every age, and the sacred order wherein her footsteps are found. Vain must be our claim to the high relationship, if our order or travel is not found in the "footsteps of the flock," and our doctrine not sustained by the sacred oracles. May the Lord graciously guide us in wisdom's path. Truly without him we can do nothing. How helpless we are naturally, lost and undone. In our dear Redeemer "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." How earnest the desire of the child of grace to know and follow the truth. To him it is the pearl of great price. Yet how keenly he mourns over his own ignorance and barrenness in reference to these things. He longs to be filled with the fullness of God. Nothing short of this will satisfy one born from above.

"O why should I wander an alien from thee,

And cry in the desert for bread?"

The very hungerings and thirstings are testimonies of life eternal. The desire is the evidence of the rich possession. "Christ in you the hope of glory." May we wait in patient, fervent hope the unfolding of his will, the rich displays of his glory, until mortality is "swallowed up of life." "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. \* \* \* For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."—1 Corinthians xiii. 10-12.

In hope of glorious perfection beyond the stormy scenes of earth, of blissful immortality in realms unstained by mortal woe, I remain, as ever, yours to serve in bonds of gospel grace,

WM. M. SMOOT.

"AND thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. i. 21.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—We are now standing upon the threshold of another year, the one thousand, eight hundred and eighty-seventh anniversary of the birth of our Lord and Savior, and with us there is a mingled feeling of regret and gratitude. While it would seem that none have had more reason to regret their ingratitude to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, surely none have had more reason for gratitude to God for his protection and watchful care over us another year. We know that we have many times in the past year heedlessly and unjustly grieved the Holy

Spirit; yet in his great mercy he does not deal with us according to our deserts, and it is of his mercy alone that we are not consumed. What a mercy it is for such poor creatures as we feel ourselves to be that it is written, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Also, to feel the assurance that Elijah's God still reigns over the exile captives to do them good. Although my mind has been particularly directed to these words and this subject, I have had many questionings in my mind as to the propriety of selecting a passage from the Scriptures and trying to enlarge upon it, and also as to what is the position of woman in the church. In the Scriptures she is spoken of as the "weaker vessel." Paul, figuratively speaking of her, says she is to "be in subjection to her husband." Although he spoke of a mystery, he spoke concerning Christ and the church. Yet she is not without honor. Sarah was the figure of Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of all her free born children; and there were many other honorable women that we might mention. It was a woman who wrought a good work when she anointed the body of Jesus. They were the daughters of Jerusalem who wept over the crucified Savior and followed him to his burial, and his resurrection was first made known to them. While I have felt to halt between these Scriptures and that as recorded in First Corinthians xiv. 34, with me there seems to be an overruling power, causing me to express such thoughts as I have had, as unto faithful brethren, who will in consideration of the apostle's words endeavor to bear with the weak. "Let brotherly love continue." John also rejoiced greatly when he found his brethren walking in the truth. May this same spirit be found among us, while each one endeavors to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. "A wounded spirit who can bear?"

It is now nearly nineteen hundred years since these words were spoken by an angel to Joseph concerning this wonderful and mysterious event; for it must be admitted that "great is the mystery of godliness." It would be useless for us to attempt to tell the many thoughts we have had upon this subject as the return of another year revives them in our mind; but may it suffice when we say that we believe these same words are the life and hope of the conscious sinner to-day. They have in no degree lost their power and influence, for they speak expressly to each one, that for this cause came he into the world, to "save his people from their sins." If for that cause he came, he certainly never made a failure of it. Then "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." I never can think long upon this sub-

ject till my mind reverts to prophecy; for the Old Testament Scriptures lay the foundation of all that is involved in the New Testament. Jesus himself said, "Search the Scriptures;" "for they are they that testify of me." This must have referred to the Old Testament Scriptures, as they were the only ones in existence at that time. As a revelation of himself can only come from the Creator of all things, it is to the Scriptures that we wish to turn, whose voice is weightier than the fallible deductions of philosophy. Speculations on those things which are hidden from the wise and prudent only lead to error. The world by wisdom knows not God. As I have thought upon these things, it has seemed to me that we can go as far back as the very first words of holy writ, as typifying that event which never since the creation of the world has had an equal. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Here is presented to the mind the idea of the Son of God, who was before all things, and by whom all things consist. His ways are so much higher than our ways, as the heavens are higher than the earth. But if there be any questioning in the mind as to this having reference to him who was to come, who was to save his people Israel, whose reward was with him, and his work before him, there is no doubt as to the words following, in the eleventh verse of the same chapter, testifying of the seed whose fruit should be as the sands of the sea for number. But it is useless for me to attempt to select from the Old Testament Scriptures passages which convey the idea of the coming of the Son of God and the sacrifice that was to follow; and it may be justly said that every portion of the inspired record proclaims either the sufferings or the glory of Jesus, and the final triumph of his body, his church, his bride, over every enemy. By taking the Scriptures in their entirety, what a wonder of wonders to contemplate; for the event that fulfilled the prophecy was the event spoken of in prophecy. It is a book written by various persons, living in different ages, without a possibility of their ever having met in this life; yet it is pervaded by the one spirit, one doctrine, one design, with sublime authority as its peculiar characteristic. The presence of the one supreme guiding mind controls the utterances of the writers throughout; and that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, is the only principle on which we can accept it. To those whose eyes have been blessed and strengthened from time to time to look upon its sacred pages with delight, it is a written revelation from God.

But in considering the subject I attempted to write on, my mind more particularly turns to the prophecy of Isaiah, where God says by the mouth of that prophet, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure

foundation." "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" This foundation, this stone, is the rock Christ Jesus, on which the church of God is builded, and no power shall prevail against it. It is the stone which the builders rejected; because of finding no comeliness in him. He was despised and set at naught, but is now become the head of the corner of the spiritual house, "which house we are," says an apostle, "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." God has chosen Zion as the place of his rest, wherein his weary may find rest. The psalmist says, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul." "Glorious things are spoken of thee, Zion, city of God." Look upon Zion, a quiet habitation, no jar, no discord; for judgment has God laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. Though the earth may reel to and fro like a drunkard, yet in this mountain shall this song be sung, "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." The Lord is our salvation, our righteousness, our justification, and our redemption. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." These are things which I sometimes love to think of, and I have meditated upon them of late.

These meditations lead me on, even to the foot of the cross, to the perfect sacrifice, to Christ's great act of obedience. Why was such an act necessary? Could not divine justice have been satisfied without so tragic and cruel an event? Evidently not; for we hear the dear Savior's agonizing prayer, as the awful weight of the sins of his people was laid on him, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." The cup did not pass; therefore it was not possible. Was ever love like this? He drank it deep, pouring out his soul unto death. The death of Christ was indispensable. The Savior of sinners must go as it was written of him. For this cause came he into the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. This was an expression of God's love toward fallen humanity. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Though in his great pity and love for his bride, his church, he poured out that precious blood, which is the life, yet it is written for the consolation of Israel that not a bone of his body was broken. It was his whole and perfect body that was laid in the dark caverns of the tomb, and it was that whole, perfect, complete and glorious body that arose a conqueror over death, hell and the grave. As he went forth bearing precious seed, so doubtless he will come again, bringing his sheaves with him. It was not the mere fact of Christ's

crucifixion on the cross that is of importance to us; but the principles involved in the act are what constitute the saving power. "The wages of sin is death." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Adam disobeyed the command given him, and was condemned to death. Hence sin, which is a transgression of the law. Adam being the father of the whole human family, his posterity are involved in the same condemnation. They are but propagations of his own being in all its qualities and relations, and are all sinners on their own account, and are therefore subject to death. Christ's people being members of the Adamic family, they are naturally under the same condemnation. How is it possible for them to be emancipated from the law? If left to themselves they must inevitably perish, because they are incapable of righteousness, and cannot set aside the condemnation which they are already under. The law must be upheld. The word has gone out of the mouth of God, and cannot return to him void. Christ meets all the necessities. The law required the death of the transgressor. He took their nature. It was also necessary that such a sufferer should be sinless. This necessity for sinlessness was constantly prefigured under the law by the spotlessness of the beasts offered in sacrifice. If Christ had been a son of Adam merely, he would have been unfit for sacrificial purpose. On the other hand, if he had only the immaculate nature, he would have been equally disqualified, as it was the fleshly nature that must suffer in him. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. The law would admit of no substitute. Christ is one with his people, and they are one with him. In what he went through they went through. Paul says that believers were crucified with Christ; and as God raised him from the dead, so was every member of his body raised with him to a glorious immortality. If Christ had been a personal transgressor, the law of sin would have kept him in the grave. The way of salvation could not then have been opened through him. A dead Savior would have been no ark of refuge. But this is the record, "God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Paul says of those who are in Christ, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." May it be ours to gladly accept this, and in due time be delivered from the bondage of mortal flesh, which lies heavily upon us, and be promoted to the glorious liberty of the redeemed of God in a world without end.

I hope you will try and bear with me for being so lengthy. In due time we shall reap, if we faint not.

Your most unworthy sister, if one at all,

ABBIE CODDINGTON.

FREMONT, Neb., Dec. 18, 1887.

ROHRERSVILLE, Md., Oct. 23, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—My mind has been much impressed in the past year to write my experience for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but my unworthiness, and a fear of ridicule from those that are dear to me by the ties of nature, have prevented my writing. During the past few weeks it has been on my mind day and night, and I have felt I must write and bear testimony of the great things the Lord has done for me; and surely he has performed a great miracle in my case; for I was blind, and he gave me eyes to see; deaf, and he gave me ears to hear. My parents were members of the Lutheran Church, and I always attended Sunday School. At the age of eleven years I was very much troubled on account of my sins. There was a revival going on, and my sister, who was two years older than I, professed religion. I wanted to go to the mourners' bench, but they said I was too young; so I thought I would wait until I became old enough, and I could then get religion. I tried to forget my sinful condition, but could not. I longed for the time to come when I could have that burden of sin taken away. When I was fourteen years of age the "United Brethren" had a revival. I had always heard the preachers say, "You must come to the mourners' bench to get religion." I went with others to the bench; and while they after a few nights professed religion, I found no relief. My burden became greater, and all my praying did me no good. At last I gave up going, and thought I would wait until there was a revival at the Lutheran Church. The next winter I went to brother Crampton's to live, and for the first time heard of the Old School Baptists. I was always very fond of reading, and I soon became acquainted with the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I would often become so angry when reading that I would throw the paper down and resolve that I would never read such hard doctrine again; but almost before I would be aware of what I was doing, I would have the paper again. And although I thought brother Crampton and his wife, Mrs. Ann Crampton, were good people, and I loved them almost as well as my own parents, yet I did not think they were christians. I thought myself better than they, and would attend Sunday School and meeting, not because I enjoyed myself, but because I thought I was doing right. Many times after hearing brother Crampton talk I have went to my room and wept bitter tears, and prayed to God to forgive my sins and show me the right way. But I still thought I had the work to do. When I was seventeen years old the Lutherans held a revival meeting, and I felt sure I would be converted. I went to the bench night after night, but got worse instead of better. I felt myself to be the most miserable wretch on earth. I even promised the Lord that if he would forgive my

sins and take that awful burden (which seemed almost more than I could bear) away, I would serve him all my life, and would never go back to the world, but would be a good christian. But all this did me no good. The last night I was at the bench the preacher came to me and said, "Do you believe Christ died for you?" I told him I did. "Well then," he said, "you are blessed. You need not expect a great manifestation of his love. Only believe, and you are saved." My heart sank within me at his words. I was no better than I had been, and they wanted to make me believe I was converted. If only I could have got rid of that burden (which you, dear brethren, and all the dear children of God, have experienced), I would have been satisfied, I thought. But I would not profess to be converted when I knew I was not. I felt that I had done all in my power. I felt I was lost, and there was no help for me. I think then was the darkest moments of my life. I thought I would not try to pray, and would never go to the mourners' bench again. I got up off my knees and sat down. But where was my burden of sins? It was gone; but how? I was amazed that it should be taken away after I had quit praying. I did not feel to rejoice greatly; only a peaceful feeling, such as I cannot express. But it only lasted for a little while. Before I left the meeting-house I was filled with doubts and fears. My greatest trouble then was that I had deceived the members. They all thought I was converted, and I was not. But I thought I would wait until the next night, and then I would tell them. I went the next night, and though I felt myself to be the worst person there, I said nothing to any one about my feelings. I had no love for the members. I thought I was different from any one else. I did not attend the meetings any more. I was not at brother Crampton's at this time, but at home. I did not go back for a year. In the mean time I united with the Lutherans, but did not feel at home. I would often wonder, while sitting under the sound of their preaching, if any one in the meeting-house felt as I did. I could not enjoy the preaching. I only went from a sense of duty. When I returned to brother Crampton's everything seemed changed. The love I had for them was different. They appeared to me to be so much better than what they had been, and I began to love to read the SIGNS; but I could not believe their doctrine until the death of Mrs. Ann Crampton, in December, 1878. Elder E. V. White came to preach her funeral, and for the first time I heard a gospel sermon. The latter part of his sermon was on experience. I thought surely some one has been telling him about me, and then I remembered I had never spoken to any one of my troubles. I drew back so that he could not see me. I felt as though he could read my very

thoughts. The next day he went home, and O how sorry I was to see him go. I thought, O if only I could hear him preach again. After this, in my conversation with brother Crampton I told him of some of my troubles, and how different the Bible seemed. I could see election and predestination all through it, and it seemed so strange that I had never seen it before. He spoke very comforting to me, and explained a great deal to me, and O how much I enjoyed those conversations with him. In the spring I went with him to the Mill Creek Church, and heard Elders Furr and White preach, and O what a feast it was to me. I enjoyed meeting with the brethren. I was a stranger, but they were so kind that I felt at home among them, and O how I wished I were one in that little flock. But I felt I was not fit to be baptized, and thought I could wait, and perhaps I would get better. Baptism was constantly on my mind, but I would try to forget it. I was married in 1879, and did not get to meeting or to hear the Baptists preach until the Association at Mill Creek Church. I went with the intention of uniting with the church, if they would receive me; but there was no invitation given for any one to come before the church, and I felt it was because I was not a child of God, and I came home more unhappy then when I went, for I had anticipated so much. I thought I was going to enjoy the meeting so much, but I was disappointed. In all that company I felt like one alone. When I came home I resolved to forget all the Old School Baptists, for I thought I could never be one of them. I did not hear any more preaching until one year ago last September, when brother Crampton's second wife died. Elder White preached her funeral. After preaching, he spoke some very comforting words to me, and told me to write to him, and asked me to attend the next meeting at Mill Creek. I did write to him, and O what a good, kind letter he wrote me in answer. I received it on Friday before the meeting, and the next morning against the wishes of my husband, I went to meeting, got in the company of brother Crampton and Elder White on the train, who were very kind, and I felt I was among friends when I met the brethren and sisters. Although I had not been there for four years, they had not forgotten me. After preaching on Saturday, I tried to tell them what the Lord had done for me; and although I could say but little, they received me, and I was baptized the next day by Elder White, and I think it was the happiest day of my life. I love the brethren, and those at Mill Creek are very dear to me. I have not been to meeting since my baptism, sickness and other causes having prevented my going. My husband has never spoken one word against the Old School Baptists since I united with the church, which has

caused me to hope the Lord has commenced a good work in his heart. I have not seen any Old School Baptists since I was at Mill Creek; but through brother Crampton, who is a dear and faithful father in Israel, I get the SIGNS to read; and I do hope, dear brethren, you may be given power from the Lord to speak comforting words to the children of the King who are scattered abroad through the land. Many times when I have been cast down and filled with doubts and fears, I have been comforted by reading some kind and loving word in the SIGNS. I would say to the dear ones, Write on and often. If I could write as some do, I would not withhold my pen; but I am such a poor, ignorant creature, I cannot write or talk like others. I feel myself to be the least in the kingdom, if one at all, and often wonder of what use I am to the church. If they knew what a poor, sinful creature I am, and how unworthy I am to be called a child of God, they would have no fellowship for me. But though at times my hope is very faint, I would not exchange it for all the world contains.

Dear brethren, I have written more then I intended, and what I have written seems so poor that I hardly know whether to send it or not; but I hope you will use your own judgment in publishing it.

With love to you, and all the dear children of God, I am, I hope, your sister,

LUCIE E. GORDON.

Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, Feb. 1, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I received the second number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the year 1888, and in reading brother C. W. Anderson's letter my mind or understanding became greatly changed. I had not known before that Elder J. Rowe had written a pamphlet. While reading brother Anderson's extracts from Rowe's pamphlet the words of Paul to Timothy came vividly into my mind, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."—1 Tim. i. 18-20. I consider those extracts to be presumptuous blasphemy. James says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." So this letter is intended as a confession of my faults in writing my former letter, and I trust the brethren will pray for an old sinner. But I feel under ten fold more obligation to make confession to the Lord for my irreconciliation; for although I firmly believe the doctrine of the predestination of all things, yet to feel reconciled to it I cannot. I hope there is no one else so wicked as I am. May the Lord

forgive me. The Lord Jesus saith, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?"—Matt. xx. 15. It might not be out of place here to relate a little incident that occurred under my immediate notice. Several years ago the Presbyterians held their Presbytery in this city, and there was an old preacher by the name of Johnston among them, a very old man. He published that he would preach in the evening on the ninth chapter of Romans. Curiosity more than anything else caused me to go to hear what the old man would make out of it. I supposed he would have his sermon prepared, but he had not. At the appointed time he was there ready, and commenced at the beginning of the chapter, speaking extempore. He stumbled along over the stumbling-stone that is laid in Zion until he came to the place where Paul saith, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," and down he fell (not physically). He made a long pause, and then said, "Well, brethren, what shall we do with this? It is Bible. I do not see what we can do with it. It is Scripture, and we cannot reject it. It does not look reasonable to me that God would harden the hearts of men; but it is Scripture, and I will leave it where it is, for I cannot do anything with it." Then another preacher, a middle-aged man by the name of Swenia, arose and said, "We have been very poorly entertained this evening. The old brother took a subject that he did not understand himself. I do not believe a preacher ought to do that. I do not profess to understand it, and consequently I would not undertake to give an explanation of it; but my concern is, Am I one of those hardened ones? Am I a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction?" He then dismissed the congregation.

The word "predestination" is not a Bible word. The word "predestinated" occurs twice in the first chapter of Ephesians; and the word "predestinate" occurs twice in the eighth chapter of Romans. These are the only places where the words occur at all; and, what is remarkable, they only occur in the writings of Paul. The other inspired writers, neither prophets nor apostles, use the words at all, although they use that which is equivalent; but in the New Revision of the Bible the word "predestinate" does not occur at all, but that which is equally as strong does. The New Revision renders those passages thus: "Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."—Eph. i. 5. "In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will; to the end that we should be

unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ."—Verse 11. "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. viii. 28-30. I have made these quotations for the special benefit of those who may not have the New Revision in their possession. Now here we have set forth before us the foreordination of all God's elect people to eternal glory in clear, unmistakable language, that is incapable of being controverted. Now let us compare it with other Scriptures. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."—Jude 4. New Revision: "For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old set forth unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ." Now, what is the difference in the meaning of the language used by the word of inspiration in the former case, and that used in the latter case? Is there any difference? I cannot perceive any. No sound Baptist would even think of denying the former; then why should they deny the latter? If the latter was brought about by permission, then so was the former; for there is no difference in the meaning of the language used. Then it follows, after all, that our eternal salvation has for its foundation mere permission, which in reality is not a whit better than man's free will. Alas! what a sandy foundation! Again, here is a parallel case, the two classes; and there are only two classes, the saint and the sinner. All mankind belong to either the one or the other; and Peter shows them both, and presents them to view side by side, saying, "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto

also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." New Revision: "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession; that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter ii. 4-9. I have made the above quotation from both the authorized version of King James and the New Revision; and the American Revision renders it thus: "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; who stumble, being disobedient to the word; to which they were also appointed." Now the question is, What is the meaning of the word "also"? Webster defines it to mean, "In the same manner; likewise; too." In accordance with Webster's definition of the word "also" we have it thus, "These were appointed unto disobedience, in the same manner those were appointed unto obedience." If this is merely a permissive appointment in the one case, it surely is in both cases. Then the matter would stand thus: God hath permitted all mankind to be obedient and save themselves, or disobedient and damn themselves. Or, to use the scriptural word "appointed," it would read thus: God hath appointed all men to be obedient and be saved, or disobedient and be damned. In either case, salvation would depend upon the obedience or disobedience of the creature man, and predestination would have no place in the matter of salvation at all. Paul saith, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."—1 Thess. v. 9.

Now, my dear brethren, one and all whom it may concern, I freely and willingly take back all that I have written in a former letter that may have given offense to the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES concerning the course taken by Elder J. Rowe, of Georgia, on the subject of predestination. I at the time of writing not having been informed of his having written a pamphlet in refutation of the scriptural doctrine of God's predestinating purpose concerning the occurrence of all events which transpire, I hope that what I have herein written will prove satisfactory to all who may have been offended with my former letter.

FEBRUARY 4, 1888.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER BEEBE:—Since writing the foregoing I received your kind and very welcome letter of the 20th instant, with many thanks. You commence your letter with these words, "It was with feelings of no ordinary regret that I

read your severe reprimand of the 26th ult." Now, my dear brother, I assure you that I did not intend what I wrote as a reprimand at all, much less a severe reprimand, neither did I suppose that you would regard it as such. I intended it as a labor of love. I assure you that it was for Zion's sake, which I esteem far above every earthly good, that I wrote what I did. Had I not loved you, my dear brother, and the cause of Zion, I would have taken no notice of it nor cared for it. I have no desire to be at ease in Zion. The word of inspiration says, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria," &c.—Amos vi. 1. I am truly sorry, my dear brother, that I hurt your feelings so badly; but I hope that it will prove to be among the "all things" that work together for good. Nevertheless, I desire and ask your forgiveness.

Yours to serve in the gospel,  
JOHN STIPP.

GHEENT, Ky., Jan. 24, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose to you a letter from brother F. L. Cox, of Smithville, Charlotte Co., Va., in which he gives his christian experience. I have been interested in reading it, for the reason that in the christian experience of all God's dear people is found the glorious gospel of God our Savior. They are all taught of the Lord, and have learned the same great truth, which is that their Lord in his wonderful mercy, love and power has manifested himself to them as their Savior and Redeemer, and has shown them that in themselves they are lost, ruined and undone; and that by reason of his everlasting love, made manifest to them in their experience, they are made to see their lost condition, and enabled to trust alone in the finished work of their dear Redeemer, who by one offering hath forever perfected them that are sanctified. In their experience their chief desire is made manifest to give to the Lord the glory due unto his name. But you will dispose of it as you may deem best.

As ever, yours in christian love,  
H. COX.

SMITHVILLE, Va., Jan. 16, 1888.

DEAR BROTHER COX:—It may perhaps appear somewhat strange to you that one who is an utter stranger to you should take the liberty of addressing you as I do; but to me, although unknown in the flesh, you are as a loved and honored brother. Your comforting and precious letters to the household of faith, published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, are eagerly perused by me, and never, that I can remember, without striking a responsive chord in my heart—without calling up to me some part of my own experience, and often causing my eyes to moisten as I seem to catch a faint view of the wonderful and merciful dealings of God with me. It may be a comfort to you to write. I know it is a great comfort

to me to read your writings, and through them I feel as though I knew you, and could talk to you face to face. I have for some time felt impressed to write you, not only to express the great comfort and pleasure I find in reading whatever emanates from your pen, but also to tell you, as best I may, what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, and how, through his rich and unmerited grace, he has led me from darkness to light, and given me a hope in his mercy, through the merits of his dear Son. I do not know why I should write this, nor can I hope that you will find it worth reading; but I trust you will pardon me, even should you cast it aside.

I was born at Cambridgeport, Massachusetts. I cannot recollect any period in my early life when I did not have what some call religious impressions. I seemed then to have known that there was a God, and that I was a sinner; but the natural Arminianism in me was predominant, and was intensified from the fact that I was given the benefit of Sunday School teaching with New School Baptists and Methodists. The ideas that I then received, as I now remember them, were the duty of strictly obeying the ten commandments, which I faithfully attempted to do, with the result that I was known as a "good little boy." I was carefully trained at home, kept from all vicious company, and it was not till I grew older that the depraved propensities of my sinful nature became so manifest. In 1871 my father moved to Virginia, and in 1873 commenced to publish a newspaper, and I entered the office to learn the printer's trade. I was then about fifteen years old; and while not a bad boy, in the common acceptance of the term, I had at times some startling impressions of death, judgment and eternity, and of my great sinfulness. Still I was trying to follow my Sunday School instructions, and thereby, as I vainly thought, win the favor and approbation of God. During the fall of 1873 the Methodists held a revival meeting in the town, and as I had been seriously impressed with my dangerous state for some time, I attended regularly; but the burden of sin, which I felt was weighing me down, seemed to grow heavier instead of lighter. I then seemed to be sinking down into the depths of despair, until just before the close of the last of those meetings, when my troubles seemed to vanish, and my load of deep sorrow on account of my sins left me, but how or why I could not tell. Everything was light, joy and beauty about me. A heavenly calmness, to which I had been hitherto a stranger, was sweetly mine. Looking back on that part of my life, I cannot now say that I did not receive a hope in the mercy of God through Christ, which has never quite deserted me, though sometimes very faint; but it was a hope for which I could give no reason, except the goodness and mercy of God. Still I have never

since known any other time to which I can point and say, Here I first felt my sins forgiven. O how I have longed and hoped for a better and brighter evidence. For a time I felt that all was smooth before me, that my feet were planted on the Rock, and nought could move them or make me slip; but alas! I was yet full of Arminianism. Having been so earnest a believer in the "do and live" system, I was anxious to hasten to work. I made application to the New School Baptists, and was received for baptism; but they were so disorganized that no further steps were taken in my case. For a time I waited patiently, and went on prosperously. I read the Bible regularly, and tried to pray several times each day; but gradually my interest cooled, and youthful pleasures appeared more and more alluring. I would follow the bent of my natural inclinations, and drift with the world for a time. The thought would often come to me, Where am I going? Then, affrighted, I would hasten to my Bible and to prayer; but soon I would grow lukewarm, and drift away into worldly amusements. So the years passed away, and when I grew to manhood I fell deeper into the snares of the world. I have not language to describe the agony of soul that I suffered at times, when my eyes would apparently be open, and I was permitted to see my condition. I gave myself up for lost, for I thought surely that no child of God could live and do as I was doing. My first hope seemed a delusion. The thoughts of God and of death were frightful to me. O how I yearned to live a holy life, to follow the perfect pattern of Christ, to have a new heart and a right spirit within me. But my worst troubles then were because I did not feel thus all the time; but my remorse would pass away, and my fears would leave me, and I would relapse into my former sinful ways.

It was thus that time passed away with me. At times I was swallowed up with the affairs of the world, and then struggling and striving to live a holy life, and to enter in at the strait gate, as I had been exhorted to do. While I had some seasons of peace and joy in believing, yet I was all the time looking for perfection in the flesh. My many slips would at times drive me to the borders of despair. I attended New School Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian meetings, but found no comfort nor help there. To my mind all denominations were alike, only differing on immaterial points. I knew but little about Old School Baptists, although my mother was one, and was a daughter of Elder J. A. Badger, of Maine, and a sister of Elder J. N. Badger, of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. I thought Old School Baptists were too good a people for me to think of attempting to go with. I can give but a brief and imperfect sketch of the many ups and downs through which I was called to pass

in those, to me, sad and sorrowing years. In 1886 my mother and I were visiting in Loudoun County, Virginia. While there I heard no preaching, and saw but few Old School Baptists. My heart burned within me when I saw those dear people of God. Ah, thought I, these are indeed God's chosen, peculiar people; and my great desire was to be worthy to have a place among them. I returned home, feeling as I never had before. I then read the SIGNS and the Bible; and gradually, little by little, was my understanding opened by the Spirit's power, as I hope and trust, to see some of the beauties and glories of the plan of salvation through Christ. I think I was then enabled to understand God's holy word as I had never before, and to love more intensely its sacred truths. Gradually, step by step, was I led, trembling, halting, doubting, until I came to see the Old School Baptists as the only people following in the footsteps of Christ and his apostles; but I did not then dare to hope that I might ever be numbered among them. In February of last year I was married to Miss Hunton, of Fauquier County, Virginia. She was a member of the Broad Run Old School Baptist Church, in that county. She soon discovered the state of my mind and feelings. While she did not say much, her few words gave me much encouragement. Gradually was I led on, till I was enabled, as I trust, to own Jesus as my Redeemer, as the author and finisher of my faith, and to lay hold of the promises set before me; and strength was given me to follow my Lord in the ordinances of his house. During that summer my mother, my wife and I visited Fauquier and Loudoun Counties, where I heard the first Old Baptist sermon I ever remember hearing. At that meeting I was received into the fellowship of the Broad Run Church, and on the third Sunday in July was baptized by my uncle, Elder J. N. Badger, thus publicly declaring my faith in my Lord. A day or two afterward we returned home to this county, where the sound of the true gospel trumpet has seldom been heard. The fashionable denominations of this corrupt age meet in their costly edifices, which they call their churches, and their so-called worship is but making their offerings to idols, and money is their god. With it they claim to be helping the Lord to carry on his work. O what blasphemy! Here we dwell, in the midst of those who deny the sovereignty of our God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; but in our lonely and afflicted state we are not without comfort, for our Lord has said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord." Our trust is in the Lord; and our prayer is that he may soon send the light of the glorious gospel into this land of Egyptian darkness, and speedily dis-

perse that darkness by the healing rays of the Sun of righteousness. But to comfort us in this land of desolation the Lord has blessed us with the sweet privilege of reading his holy word, and enjoying the sweet and ever-precious truth of the gospel written by his faithful servants and published in the SIGNS. Through the rich mercy of our God we are thus blessed, and enabled to spend many precious hours in reading his never-failing promises to his chosen people, and thus communing with the dear saints, who by divine grace are prepared to comfort the poor in Zion who read the precious truth published in the SIGNS. But I must say that at times a peace which I trust is of the Lord enters my heart, and then I seem to catch some faint glimpse of the ever-glorious presence of my Lord. Yet most of my days I go mourning because of indwelling sin, and am often made to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But the inquiry often arises, Am I not deceived, and deceiving others? But in the midst of my ignorance and sorrow there is one thing that I think and trust I know, which comforts me, and that is, The Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. If I have that knowledge, it is the gift of God, freely bestowed upon me. In that most precious knowledge I am made to say that all I am and all I know comes not by reason of worth or merit in me.

My dear mother desires me to assure you of her heartfelt christian love and fellowship; and to say to you that in years past, when she was alone in the world, and cut off from the society of the dear saints, your letters in the SIGNS came to her laden with great comfort and consolation. She then felt greatly drawn to you by the sweet spirit of love which seemed to breathe in all those letters. In this my wife joins my mother, and bids me say to you that she longs to meet you face to face.

Now, dear brother, I must bring this long letter to a close by saying that our desires are that when you are blessed with the sweet spirit of prayer and supplication, remember at the throne of grace us, poor and afflicted ones, who are strangers to you in the flesh, but we fondly hope not in the Spirit.

I subscribe myself your humble brother in hope,

F. L. COX.

STEWARTSVILLE, Mo., Jan. 10, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Once more I am seated to write to you and the dear readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Not that I think I can edify any of them, unless my past experience, since I have become a cripple for life, may help those who are and may be called to suffer the remainder of their natural life. I do not remember, dear brethren Beebe, the date of my letter

that I wrote to you on business after I got the fall. Last August was a year. But for months my sufferings were so intense that all spiritual enjoyment seemed to be dead, except pleading for mercy to be extended to me, to enable me to bear the severe cramping with some degree of patience. I would read the promises in different parts of the Scriptures, but not one could I claim. Truly I felt desolate, for my way seemed hedged up, so much so that I began to wonder, Is it all a delusion? Is there no reality in what I have been building my hope of a blissful home at God's right hand when I am called from earth? O those doubts for days! I would read the SIGNS through and through, hoping that some experience would soften those hard feelings; but in vain. When almost in despair those sweet words seemed spoken to me so plainly that I could not resist, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed." The stony feeling was gone; tears flowed easily now. My poverty made me weep. O! I had nothing to buy with, no, not even a good thought, unless it is given me by my heavenly Father. So I did not derive much comfort, and tried to examine closely for two or three days whether I could take any encouragement; and I had to conclude that the desire for holiness was something good, for which my praise is due. Then this came with such force that I could not resist the sweet calm that it brought with it, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."—1 Peter i. 18, 19. I got the Testament and read to the end of the twenty-third verse, and all of it seemed to give me rest. I have had clouds and some sunshine since, but nothing to equal that desert-lost feeling; and I hope and trust that my heavenly Father will not let me backslide so far again. I feel to trust him now; and when the light of his countenance is withdrawn I must hope and wait, for I have no one else to go to. Pray for me, that I may be enabled to bear with patience and humility this severe and sore affliction; for I am never entirely free from pain. I cannot take a step without crutches, as I cannot bear the least weight on my left foot.

This would have been sent two weeks since, but for hoping that I might be able to get to Plattsburgh, where I had strong hopes to get two new subscribers to the SIGNS; but the weather has been so cold, and the snow banked so high in places, that it was not thought prudent. I will try when I go down. Please send the SIGNS to Keystone, Mo., as heretofore.

May the Lord bless you, and enable you to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," is the prayer of

M. B. DUDLEY.

HARUZ.

THERE can be no such thing as contingency with God, because every event is spoken of as absolutely certain with God; and with him there can be no succession of knowledge—only a manifestation of the same to man. For he comprehends all things from eternity to eternity, in one most perfect and unalterable view, so that his whole eternal duration is *vita interminabilis, tota, simul, et perfecta possessio*; or in his endless being and perfections it is one eternal now. All events are known in perfect possession, and continually present.

HELEZ.

INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH.

WILL brother F. A. Chick be so kind as to grant (if convenient) the wish of an old sister (nearly seventy-three), and give his views on Matthew xiii. 44 and Revelation vi. 9-11? I want to know particularly what price was paid for the field. Was the field the whole world of mankind? I hope I know what the treasure is.

My dear brother Chick, your very lucid and happy manner of explaining the written word of God causes me to trouble you in this way, if it will not trespass too much on your time.

With much christian love,  
R. P. HELM.

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G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish through the SIGNS that I have changed my post office address from Pleasant Valley, Fairfax Co., Va., to Herndon, Fairfax Co., Va., and oblige your brother in hope and fellowship,

A. B. FRANCIS.

"THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

EVIDENCES OF TRUST IN THE LIVING GOD.

"FOR therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe."—1 Timothy iv. 19.

It is one of the peculiar marks of the true subjects of divine grace that they are an afflicted and poor people, laboring and heavy laden, and by their sufferings they are identified with their great Redeemer. While it appears to natural reason that they on whom God has bestowed his great love should be particularly favored with exemption from the common afflictions of the race of Adam, it is expressly declared by inspiration that unto them it is especially given to suffer for the sake of Christ.—Phil. i. 29. They are not only called to endure the pains and sorrows which are common to all the sinful family of man, but in addition to this they must suffer trials and afflictions of which others can know nothing. To these the apostle refers in our text. They are of such a kind as can be no cause of suffering to any others but those who are led by the Spirit of God to love holiness and abhor sin. So the contrast is presented in the seventy-third Psalm. The waters of a full cup of sorrows are wrung out to the generation of the children of God, so that they seem in vain to have cleansed their heart and washed their hands in innocency. All the day long are they plagued, and chastened every morning. On the other hand, the ungodly prosper in the world and increase in riches. This knowledge was too painful for the psalmist, as it is too painful for all the saints when looking at the things which are seen by the natural mind. But when he went into the sanctuary of God, then he understood their end. He says, "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction." It is only when they are in the sanctuary, alone with their God, that any of the saints can understand the dispensations of his holy will in giving worldly prosperity to those who revel in ungodliness, while to them who love his righteousness he has appointed the bitter waters of affliction and continual sorrows. Even after they have received this instruction in the secret place where none but their God was with them, they cannot communicate this wonderful secret to another, nor even show it to their own natural mind. It is taught alone by the Spirit of truth; and the natural man can no more receive the instruction than one who never saw the literal light can understand what is manifested by its power. By the faith of Jesus Christ the saints do

rejoice in the knowledge of divinely revealed truth. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14.

To the suffering saint it is the most serious question of all things whether this trust in the living God is his resting place. Of one thing he is satisfied, that is, he has no confidence in his own ability to do anything worthy of the approval of infinite justice. He has learned by personal experience not only the exceeding sinfulness of sin, but also that he is not able to deliver himself from its dreadful control. None but those who are led by the Spirit of God are thus taught. Yet to them it is so important a matter that they cannot be free from anxiety in regard to it except when the assurance of faith enables them to trust in the living God alone for justification and acceptance in his sight. All other religionists can find rest in their own works, and in the consent of their own will to accept offers of salvation. They have at least that much confidence in the flesh. The subject of divine grace knows that if one meritorious condition is left for him to fulfill his case is utterly hopeless. No other system affords the least ground of hope to him but that gospel of salvation by sovereign grace which is revealed in Jesus Christ, untrammelled by any conditions to be fulfilled by its recipient, and unlimited by any bounds restricting the infinity of the power of that grace which bringeth salvation to the lost and helpless sinner.

"For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God." Doubtlessly the primary meaning of this declaration includes with the writer the other apostles of Jesus, as in First Corinthians iv. 9-13. But in another sense, what is true of them as examples, is also true of all who have obtained like precious faith with them "through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ." There is no following of our suffering Lord without partaking of the same experience in which, "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."—Heb. v. 8, 9. When they earnestly desire to be more perfectly conformed to the likeness of Jesus, the saints but receive the answer of that desire in the terrible experience of the fellowship of his sufferings. Until they are released from the bondage of mortality the saints can never bear the perfect likeness of the immaculate purity of Jesus, as they desire to do; but they do bear his image in their fellowship of suffering with him. This is not visible to the natural mind even of the saints themselves, much less can it be seen by those who never knew the light of divine life. Neither can

their own reason understand that tribulation is the channel through which they receive the answer to their earnest prayer for clearer assurance of hope. Yet there is no other way in which true hope is wrought in the saints. So Paul says, "We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope."—Rom. v. 3, 4. It appears just the opposite of this to those who have only the natural mind. If they were assured that their only reward in following Jesus would be found in sharing the afflictions of his disciples, the carnal world would at once willingly retire from all pretense of love to his cause. They do not even profess to be desirous of the sufferings to which the saints are called. Hence, in all systems of worldly religion proselytes are promised rewards in the heaven of eternal glory for their sacrifice of temporal pleasures. It is alone by faith that any can with Moses choose "to suffer affliction with the people of God." Nature can never make this choice; for the selfishness of the carnal mind finds no "recompense of the reward" in such suffering. It is unmistakable evidence that we do trust in the living God when we find this choice to be ours. The value of this assurance is known only to those who have experienced its strength in enabling them to triumph over temptation, doubt and fear. To those who know nothing of the trials of the followers of Jesus there can be no expression of the distress which is felt by the trembling one whose hope is tried by cruel questionings and bitter self-reproaches, while he can see in his own heart all the evils against which his soul revolts. It is here the strife prevails in which he feels that his most relentless enemies are those which dwell in this earthly house of his own tabernacle. All the labor and suffering of reproach of such characters is because they trust in the living God. If they could trust in themselves or in their own righteousness they might escape this labor. Those Pharisees who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, were not subjected to this experience of suffering. The witness borne by the realizing sense of this labor and suffering, therefore, clearly attests the genuineness of the hope of every one who feels its power.

Since it is thus demonstrated by their very labor and suffering that they who are partakers with the apostles in this experience do trust in the living God, it is evident that they are entitled to all the comfort recorded by inspiration for the benefit of those who have that peculiar trust. The Scriptures abound with assurances for their support. The inspired psalmist says, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever."—Psa. cxxv. 1. Isaiah says, "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah there is ever-

lasting strength." And Nahum joins in the thankful song, saying, "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." So it is abundantly attested by scriptural declarations, as well as by the experience of the saints, that the possession of this trust in the Lord assures the salvation of every one in whom it is revealed. In the sense of the certainty of ultimate deliverance from their troubles, therefore, they who "trust in the living God" already have the victory over all opposition, whether from the world without, or the evil heart of unbelief which is the abiding enemy of their peace within themselves.

"Who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe." In this expression the apostle presents the only and sufficient ground for trusting in the living God. If there were no revelation that this living God is able to save, it would be manifest folly for any to trust in him. This folly is charged upon the worshipers of idols.—Isa. xlv. 20. But the fact of his ability to save is demonstrated by our God in the salvation of a guilty world. No power short of divine omnipotence could have saved from utter destruction the whole race of man in the very instant when sin entered into the world. That power is displayed in the temporal salvation or preservation of all men in their earthly existence. In this way he is the Savior of all men, and in this sense all men are saved. It is clearly inconsistent to say that God is the Savior of any one who is not saved in the sense in which it is spoken. If the true meaning of this expression is that God is the Savior of all men from their sins, then it necessarily is implied that all men are so saved. But this is contrary to the express teaching of inspiration. Of some men it is written that they are "set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."—Jude 7. But if it were meant by our text that all men were saved from sin, then it would be as true of those inhabitants of the cities of the plain as of any others of the race of man. This would involve a contradiction in the inspired record, which would disprove all that is therein revealed. But the evident sense in which God is the Savior of all men is that it is by his mercy and favor that all men have their natural existence, and are saved or preserved in their temporal life by his continual watchfulness and goodness. So our Lord taught his disciples, saying that their Father which is in heaven "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matt. v. 45. And Paul said to the idolaters on Mars' hill that "in him we live, and move, and have our being."—Acts xvii. 28. This understanding is in harmony with what is taught to the saints by daily experience, as well as with all the inspired teaching of the Scriptures. In this applica-

tion also there is strong consolation for them who are troubled on every side, and perplexed, that they should not be distressed nor in despair.—2 Cor. iv. 8. While they know that even the very persecutors of the followers of Jesus are dependent for their natural life upon the omnipotence of the God of their salvation, they may well trust in that almighty arm for their preservation from the wrath of all their enemies. In the type it is recorded that "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."—Deut. xxxii. 8. So, in the order of his deliberate counsel, all things and all events are so directed that they work together to fulfill the purpose of his grace concerning the salvation of his people from their sins. By faith the saints know this; and yet so blind is their natural understanding that they are continually troubled by doubts and fears, arising from the things which appear to their natural reason to threaten the overthrow of their hope in God. When the blessed Comforter reveals this sweet truth of the immutable love of God in the heart of the trembling saint, immediately he is lifted above all doubts and fears. Then he is indeed as mount Zion, which cannot be moved; but he can no more retain that assurance for use in subsequent darkness than a benighted traveler can see by the remembrance of the light of yesterday's sunshine. In nature we can readily discern the folly of one who should conclude that he never had seen the light because he could not see in total darkness; but this is just the mode of reasoning which leads the believer in Jesus to despond under the gloom of that night in which his faith is tried when the Lord makes him to walk in darkness. It is in this very condition that the word of encouragement speaks to him, commanding him to trust in the Lord. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."—Isa. l. 10. To those who are dead in sins, and therefore have no spiritual sight, there can be no difference between light and darkness. They are not conscious of the darkness, neither can they walk either in light or darkness; having no knowledge of the light, they cannot feel the burden of the darkness. It is unmistakable evidence of the possession of life and sight when there is a realizing sense of distress under darkness. Every such living soul is a subject of this special salvation provided for "those that believe."

It is true that the eternal salvation of the saints is specially provided in the purpose of God, and in that salvation all believers are included; but in this text we understand the reference of the apostle to be to the sal-

vation which preserves the subjects of divine grace in all their changes here in time. Here the watchful care of the living God is over them for their protection, and the everlasting arms are underneath them. His special providence is their defense in the midst of all their conflicts, and he is their refuge and strength. Without this special provision for their guidance and protection they would be in a hopeless condition; for they are no more prepared to take care of themselves in their sojourn in this world of trials, than are the natural sheep, to which they are likened, to protect themselves against wolves. Hence, to them it is a very precious comfort to feel that they are the special objects of the saving care of their God. This must be experienced as a personal assurance by each of them, or they could draw no consolation from it. A general provision for the salvation of those who merit such favor may suffice to bring comfort to such as have some goodness of their own to trust; but to them whose only trust is in the sovereign grace of God nothing short of a special and personal salvation can afford any consolation. Such must feel themselves the objects of the special salvation of God, or they can have no hope.

#### SPECIAL OFFER.

PARTIALLY to repay our subscribers for their time and trouble, in procuring for us new subscribers, we will from now until April first, 1888, make the following offer in

#### CASH PREMIUMS.

To any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

#### TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS

and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

#### FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS,

sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

We have received a good many new subscribers since these terms were first published, and we hope the brethren who indorse the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS will feel a personal interest in aiding in the increase of its circulation.

These terms, brethren, are really below what we can afford; but if by this means we shall double our subscription list, and by a little effort on the part of our subscribers it can be done, we will then lower our subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents per year, and run the single sheet of eight pages weekly. Let each subscriber see what he can do.

#### BACK NUMBERS.

OUR supply of back numbers being exhausted, we can no longer fill orders for them. We printed several hundred copies extra, but they have all been sent out, and new subscribers will now be commenced with the number at which their subscription is received, and dated a year from that time.

MARRIAGES.

ON February 9, 1888, by Elder William J. Purington, at the residence of the bride's father, Mr. Henry Van Dyke Savidge and Miss Isabella Drake, both of Hopewell, N. J.

ON January 25, 1888, by Elder T. M. Poulson, in Worcester County, Md., Mr. Handy R. Shockley and Miss Martha J. Fooks, both of said county.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEPARTED this life March 12, 1887, after a lingering illness, of dropsy, Mrs. Dougherty, of Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., aged about thirty-five years.

The deceased was not a professor of religion, yet she gave evidence of having a good hope through grace, being very much resigned to her condition, and rather desired to depart and be with Christ. She left a husband, her mother, two brothers, two sisters, and other relatives, to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—March 20, 1887, Cyrus B. Tompkins, of Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., after a short illness, of lung difficulty, aged thirty-nine years. He was no professor, but a firm believer in the Old School Baptist doctrine, and had been blessed with two comforting visions by his Lord; and as he soon followed his mother, sister Betsy Ann Tompkins, who died Dec. 1886, and his grandmother, sister Abel A. Fuller, who died but little before him, he seemed drawn heavenward; and though he must bid his dear wife and children all adieu forever here, yet he felt he would be with his Lord forever. Thus within three months husband, mother and grandmother are taken, and wife, husband and children are left to mourn; and none but the Lord can heal the wound.

ALSO,

DIED—April 3, 1887, at Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., after a short sickness at last, though he had been complaining for some years, brother George Whitcomb, aged sixty-six years.

ALSO,

Brother Whitcomb was a professed Old School Baptist, loving the doctrine of grace, and the name of Jesus, as the only name whereby he must be saved. He has gone from the sorrows of the world, to rest in the Savior's love, we trust, where the wicked cease from troubling, leaving friends to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—May 2, 1887, brother Hiram Cator, of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., aged upwards of seventy years.

Brother Cator's demise was very sudden and unexpected, being in a wagon, and on his way to the village of Roxbury, about five miles distant; and when about a mile from home he sank back in the seat, and died without a struggle or groan. He survived his wife a few years. They had been members of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury many years, and we trust have gone to their reward, leaving children and grandchildren, and other relatives, with the church, to mourn their absence.

ALSO,

DIED—Nov. 22, 1887, quite suddenly, at her home in Middletown, Delaware Co., N. Y., Jane Faulkner, wife of brother Edward M. Faulkner, aged sixty years. Her disease was supposed to be of a complicated nature, affecting her heart, as she sank down quite rapidly from a usual degree of strength, after a few days of sickness, and, we trust, fell asleep in Jesus, whom she loved. From a feeling of unworthiness she had never confessed his name before witnesses, by baptism. She delighted in hearing the name of Jesus exalted, and the peace of the church was much craved by her. She was a devoted wife and indulgent mother, and our brother and his children are left lonely indeed. She has left her husband,

ALSO,

four sons, two daughters, with brethren and sisters and other relatives, to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—Sept. 11, 1887, brother Hiram Powell, of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., very suddenly, aged eighty-one years. Brother Powell was about as usual for health on the evening before his demise, having been about the street, and retired as usual. As he did not appear in the morning as was his custom, his children made inquiry, and found him dead in bed. He must have died without a struggle, as he was found lying very much like one sleeping.

Brother Powell was a professed Old School Baptist for forty years or more, and delighted in the gospel's joyful sound to the chief of sinners, of whom he often felt he was one. His sudden departure startled his family (son-in-law and daughter) with whom he lived, as death always does; yet his end being peaceful, none could wish him back to suffer more and again die. Death having done its work, he sleeps in Jesus, and leaves children and other relatives to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—After some lingering and despondency, Miss Louisa Ballard, of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., aged seventy-six years.

The deceased was not a professor, yet we believe she was a possessor of a good hope through grace, which she entertained many years. She believed the Old School Baptist doctrine, and desired the peace of the church as much as though she had been a professor. She has left numerous relatives to mourn, who mourn not (we trust) as those who have no hope, believing their loss to be gain to her.

May the Lord sanctify all afflictions to the good hope of the afflicted ones, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

It is with the deepest sorrow I write to you for publication the death of my beloved father, Ebenezer Paddack, who died Aug. 20, 1887, of trouble of the bowels, aged eighty-seven years and nineteen days. Our father was born Aug. 1, 1801, in Butler County, Ohio, and moved with his father to Preble County, Ohio, in April, 1806, to the farm where he died, and where he had lived ever since, with the exception of two years that he lived in Indiana, twelve miles south of Indianapolis. I am now past forty years old, and my father has been a member of the Old School Baptist Church ever since I can remember—I think more than sixty years. Also he has taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since I can remember, which was ever a welcome visitor. The doctrine of absolute predestination of all things, and the doctrine of election, were as sacred to him as the holy Scriptures. There has been no Old School Baptist Church in this neighborhood for a long time. There was, several years ago, a church here that was called the Ebenezer Church; but the members moved away, and there were so few left that they disbanded. My father was a most devoted man to the Bible and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In the last years of his life he became so afflicted with sciatica that he could not go about much, and the Bible and his paper were almost his constant companions.

I was never a member of any church. I always felt myself too unworthy to think of being a member of any church. During my father's lifetime he was subject to very sick spells, and would think his time was come, for which he was always more than ready, and would say to me during such times, "You are never going to hear me say to you, Prepare to meet me in heaven;" for he thought that preparation was from above. While he lived I would frequently take his paper and read a piece, but it was such dry reading to me that it would be quite

awhile before I would attempt it again. But his death had such an effect upon me that I have read the Bible and the SIGNS more since his death than ever before in my life, and it appears to me altogether like new reading. My wife and I think we cannot do without the SIGNS, for we are as anxious to get a new number as our father used to be. O that I were such a christian as my father was.

My father leaves a wife and ten living children (three dead), the youngest more than thirty-seven years old. Some of them belong to churches of different denominations, but none to the Old School Baptists. I would like to be a Baptist, but am too sinful.

My father was one of the pioneers of this country, coming here when all was a wilderness, and Indians were plentiful. Being a man of iron constitution and unsurpassed ambition, he accumulated a considerable fortune, with which he was always very liberal to the poor and needy, and those in distress were never turned away.

HARVEY PADDACK.

CAMPBELLSTOWN, Ohio.

DIED—In Frankford, Pa., at No. 4,702 Penn Street, on February 9, 1888, Deacon William H. Yerkes, aged eighty years, four months and seventeen days. Although our brother was aged and infirm, the immediate cause of his death was typhoid fever, being sick only about nine days. He had been a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton about thirty-six years, during which time he was immovably steadfast in the Bible doctrine of eternal, unconditional, personal election, and special, definite and efficacious redemption, through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that all redeemed by his precious blood would be saved by his almighty power. Rationalism and vain philosophy received no countenance from him; for he wanted to hear a "Thus saith the Lord" in all matters pertaining to God's absolute control and government of the universe. In his death the true believers and lovers of Bible truth have lost a true, tried and faithful brother and friend.

His funeral was on the 13th inst., and Elders Durand, Purington and Vail were present, as well as a large circle of relatives, friends and members of the church, showing thereby the regard they had for the loved one. At the funeral a portion of Scripture was used for a text which had for years been much comfort to him, and the same is recorded in John vi. 37-39.

Brother Yerkes has left nine children (three sons and six daughters), grandchildren, nephews and nieces, as well as the church and many dear friends; but they mourn not as they who have no hope; for said an inspired apostle, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

HOPWELL, N. J., Feb. 17, 1888.

By request I write the obituary of brother Lewis Lemay, who died near Kelseyville, Lake Co., Cal., June 3, 1886. His disease was of the heart and liver, from which he suffered four months, ending in

dropsy. He was born in the state of Virginia, July 17, 1818, and while young moved to Illinois, and was there married to Phebe Fay. In 1853 they moved to Oregon. They joined the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church in 1855, being baptized by Elder John Mansfield. He was deacon of that church, and lived a consistent member of the same until the fall of 1865, when they came with their family to Sonoma County, California, and soon after joined the Old School Baptist Church of Santa Rosa, where he served as deacon. All our preachers are gone, the most of them to the better land, so that we are left destitute, the few that are left.

They left Sonoma County about six years ago, I think, and finally settled in Lake County. They had eight children (six boys and two girls), but four of the sons preceded him to the better land. The two sons and two daughters that are left are living near their mother, to comfort and console her. I have been acquainted with the family ever since they came to this state, and have been to their home a great many times. I must say that I never saw a more quiet, peaceable family.

Brother Lemay died firm in the faith which he had advocated, a sinner saved by grace.

"Why should we start and fear to die?  
What tim'rous worms we mortals are!  
Death is the gate of endless joy,  
And yet we dread to enter there."

ELIZA M. HOLLINGSWORTH.

WOODLAND, Cal., Feb. 9, 1888.

DIED—At my home in Aurora, Kane Co., Ill., Nov. 1, 1887, my sister, Miss Elizabeth Marshall Greene, in the eighty-fifth year of her age. She had been feeble and infirm for many years, but at last was confined to her bed about three weeks. Her disease was consumption, from which she had suffered much the last two or three years, bearing all patiently, and anxious to avoid giving any unnecessary trouble. My sister was truly one of the "excellent of the earth." Naturally of a retiring and unobtrusive disposition, her intimate friends were few, out of her immediate family connection; but all who knew her well loved her deeply. The deafness which afflicted her for many years cut her off in a great measure from social intercourse, but she was always busy, working or reading, till a considerable failure of sight during the last year rendered both difficult, and the Bible and the SIGNS became almost the only things she read. One who had known her intimately for more than fifty years writes of her, "There has been no day in all these years when I have not thought of her as the most perfect character, all in all, I have ever known. Never, in all my knowledge of her, one slight deviation from rectitude."

Thus, though it was evident to all that she bore the fruits of the Spirit, from early youth through a long and eminently useful life, her evidence of an experience of grace was not satisfactory to herself, and she never made an open profession of faith; yet I have reason to know that her whole hope and trust were in the Lord, and that he sustained her in the hour of trial. We believe that she "rests from her labors," and sleeps that "Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep."

F. L. BAGG.

My beloved wife, Sarah J. Barnum, daughter of Thomas and Anna Flint, was born July 13, 1823, in Bath Township, Franklin Co., Ind., and died Jan. 8, 1888, aged sixty-four years, six months and twenty-five days. She became partially paralyzed about one year previous to her death. Her last sickness was congestion of the stomach. Her sufferings were intense, yet her confidence and trust in her

heavenly Father never once forsook her. She united with the Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church in January, 1843, was baptized by Elder D. S. Roberson, and ever after maintained a consistent walk and conversation. We were married Feb. 2, 1843. The fruit of this union were twelve children (nine daughters and three sons), four of whom preceded her to their heavenly home. Nothing gave her more pleasure than to be engaged in the Master's cause. She often expressed a longing desire to depart and be with Christ. She leaves a husband, eight children, fourteen grandchildren, the church, and a host of neighbors and friends, to mourn our loss; but we mourn not as those who have no hope.

By her request her funeral was preached by Elder W. N. Tharp, from 2 Tim. iv. 6-8.

C. L. BARNUM.

DIED—At Rutherford, N. J., Dec. 27, 1887, **Sophia Davis Haviland**, wife of W. P. Haviland, aged sixty-five years, five months and eighteen days. Again in the providence of God another dear one has been called to join the redeemed hosts above, and to sing that new song in the New Jerusalem.

The deceased at an early age professed a love for Christ and was united with the M. E. Church, of which her parents were members. She remained a communicant to that denomination until a long time after her marriage, when, by the grace of God, she was made to feel that she had never been converted, although she had espoused the cause of religion. Her experience was quite remarkable, and shows us to what extent God manifests himself to his chosen ones. At three different times she saw in a vision a magnificent rock, in the center of a beautiful lake, and many people all around, singing and praising God. This rock she believed to be Christ, the sure foundation of her faith. About twenty-two years ago, singing, "This is the way I long have sought," as she went into the water, she was baptized in Middletown, N. Y., by the late Elder G. Beebe, and up to her death loved the church and its members, believing them to be God's elect. Her sufferings were great, but she bore them with meek submission to the divine will, and replied, as did Job, "Though the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him." Her dying bed was not shrouded in grief, but a quiet calm pervaded all around, for her spirit so often communed with God. Indeed he did give her unbounding grace to sustain her in her affliction. She conversed much and often upon the one theme, the Savior's love, to husband, children and friends, who gathered around her. The last words she spoke were, "Now let me fall asleep;" and she did, as we believe, to awake in life, and receive the inheritance of a glorious immortality.

By her request, Elder B. Jenkins preached her funeral sermon from the text she chose some time before her death, 1 Thess. iv. 14.

By this death is made to mourn an affectionate husband, six children, five sisters, two brothers, and a large circle of friends.

J. H.

DIED—At the residence of her son, Theodore King, near Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., about 11 o'clock p. m., Feb. 12, 1888, **Mrs. Fanny J. King**, relict of the late Joseph Y. King, aged nearly eighty years. She was a daughter of the late Elisha Reeve, and was the last of seven sisters. She is survived by three sons and two daughters, four sons, who had all grown to manhood, having died some years ago. She was sick only a few days, dying of pneumonia.

Sister King was a beloved member of the New Vernon Old School Baptist Church, having been baptized by the late Elder Gilbert Beebe many years ago.

The funeral was held at the Old School

Baptist meeting-house in Middletown, on Wednesday, the 15th, when a discourse was delivered by Elder Benton Jenkins, after which the mortal remains were buried by the side of those of her kindred who had preceded her, in the cemetery at New Vernon.

"O happy soul, who safely passed  
Thy weary warfare here;  
Arrived at Jesus' feet at last,  
And ended all thy care."

DIED—On Feb. 4, 1888, at his residence near Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., Mr. **Ira Horton**, aged eighty years, three months and twenty-two days.

Mr. Horton had been in a decline for some time, but the immediate cause of his death was paralysis. He was a native of the town in which he died, and always resided within its limits. Although he never made a profession of religion, he had all his life attended the meetings of the Old School Baptists, until his health declined. His wife died on August 11, 1886. He is survived by two daughters, one brother, one half brother and two half sisters.

His funeral was held on Tuesday, the 7th, when a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins, and his mortal remains were laid by the side of those of his companion, in Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, N. Y.

"Our age to seventy years is set;  
How short the term! how frail the state!  
And if to eighty we arrive,  
We rather sigh and groan than live."

DIED—On Sunday morning, Feb. 12, 1888, after a brief illness, **Miss Anna E. Luff**, aged about seventy-eight years. Sister Luff has long resided in Wilmington, Del., and has been connected with the church in that city ever since my acquaintance there. I presume her membership dated back over forty years, but I have not the exact date at command. She has outlived all the members of that day, and all that were members of the church in Wilmington when I came here. Through all the disorders in which that church was involved years ago, sister Luff was steadfast. An attack of pneumonia, in addition to the weight of years and consequent infirmities, brought on the closing scene. There are now waste places that we are longing to see filled.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

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VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1888.

NO. 6.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### INFANT SALVATION.

(Continued from page 51.)

WHEN God sent his own Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh," the Lord Jesus did not suddenly dwell among us in full grown manhood, but "unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."—Isa. ix. 6. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."—Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 20-25. "The second man is the Lord from heaven."—1 Cor. xv. 47. The angel Gabriel was sent unto the virgin Mary, and said, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus."—Luke i. 31. And to the shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night, the angel of the Lord said, "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you, ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."—Luke ii. 11, 12. Simeon took the babe Christ Jesus, the Lord from heaven, in his arms, and said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—Luke ii. 28. And is not Jesus, who was once himself "the babe," the Savior of babes? Again, it is recorded of Jesus our Savior, "And the child grew."—Luke ii. 40. "And when he was twelve years old they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast." And "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."—Luke ii. 42-52. And when in full manhood, he was baptized and entered upon his public ministry. "Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age."—Luke iii. 23. We feel satisfied that the fact testified of in these texts of Scripture is significant of his being the Redeemer and Savior of babes in the womb, unborn, or sucklings, little children, and of those in manhood, in full age; that Jehovah has his elect in all the stage in life in which the offspring of Adam die. This we shall prove by the testimony of the Scriptures as we proceed. It is recorded in 1 Corinthians xv. 22, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." In Adam, we have seen that all mankind were in his loins, all sinned, and all die. Death passed upon all, for that all have sinned. In the first man Adam, babes die in the womb; they die as soon as they be born. Sucklings and young children die.

In youth and manhood we die. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "In Christ." "They that are Christ's."—1 Cor. xv. 23. All that the Father hath given to him.—John vi. 37; xvii. 2. His people.—Matt. i. 21. The election of grace, chosen in him before the foundation of the world.—Eph. i. 3. The whole family named in Christ Jesus.—Eph. iii. 11. Whom Jehovah hath eternally loved.—Jer. xxxi; John xvii. 23, 24. To whom God hath given eternal life in his own Son, and hath predestinated in him unto the adoption of sons, to be conformed to his likeness, and in whom they have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.—Eph. i. 13. The first man Adam, of the earth, is the head of all mankind. The second man is the Lord from heaven. He is the head of the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.—Eph. i. 22, 23. The head of the elect of God.—Eph. i. 3. We repeat, having seen that, in Adam, babes, children and men die, so Christ, the Lord from heaven, was made flesh, was born of a woman, was a babe in a manger, a child, he grew in stature up to manhood. Even so in Christ, they that are Christ's, whether they are appointed to die in the womb, in childhood or in manhood, they all shall be made alive. There is something precious in the contemplation of redemption under the types and shadows. When the Lord brought forth the tribes of Israel out of the house of bondage, were the infants and little ones left in bondage? Pharaoh's servants said, "Let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God." And Pharaoh put in his prohibition against "the little ones" going forth, saying, "Go now ye that are men." But Moses demanded the "little ones," saying, "We will go with our young, and with our old, with our sons, and with our daughters, with our flocks, and with our herds [for sacrifice—verse 25], will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord."—Exodus x. 9-11. The little ones were not left in bondage. The Lord their Redeemer by his power compelled Pharaoh to let the little ones go.—Exodus x. 24. And with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm God brought them forth. The blood of the pass-over lamb was shed for the little ones as well as for the adults of the house of Israel. The blood was

sprinkled upon the lintel above, and on the two side posts of the door of their dwellings, and thus all Israel, young and old, went forth under the blood out of Egypt. We know that under the law babes and little children were not excluded from the typical atonement: it was for all Israel. In 2 Chronicles xx. 13 it is recorded, "All Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives and their children." The language in the everlasting covenant is, "My people shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. xxxi. 34. And his people, whom he had predestinated unto an inheritance of eternal glory, them, it is recorded, he called, justified and glorified.—Rom. viii. 30. The promise is unto as many as the Lord our God shall call.—Acts ii. 39. These are the Lord's own loved, elect and predestinated ones, the heirs of promise.—Heb. vi. 17. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. We have seen the testimony of the Scriptures to be that babes and sucklings and children are sinful, and in consequence die. Are they then "made partakers of the divine nature?" Are they quickened, regenerated, and renewed by the Holy Ghost? Are they loved and called according to the purpose of God? If there is no evidence of this, what hope is there then that those dying in childhood are the subjects of salvation? "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us." Is there then any revelation in the Scriptures that belongs unto us of infants and children being called, regenerated, quickened, born again? Let us search the Bible and see whether this is so; for what profit is there unless we speak according to this word?—Isa. viii. 20. The apostle Paul in writing to Timothy says, "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—2 Tim. iii. 15. Of what age Timothy was when first he had the knowledge of the Scriptures by faith, we are not told; but "from a child." Many in our own times, we know, have given evidence of being taught of the Lord in very early childhood. Another very precious Bible testimony of the grace of God being made manifest in those of tender years is found in the case of

Samuel. He was a child given in answer to prayer; as Hannah, his mother, saith, "For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him." In fulfillment of her vow, when she had weaned him she brought him unto Shiloh and presented him unto the Lord: and "he worshiped the Lord there."—1 Sam. i. 11, 20, 23, 28. Again it is recorded, "Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. Moreover, his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice." "And the child Samuel grew before the Lord." "The child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord and also with men."—1 Sam. ii. 18, 19, 21, 26. While yet a young child, the Lord called Samuel by name, and revealed unto him his word. "And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh; for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel by the word of the Lord."—1 Sam. iii. 19-21. This is a full and very precious testimony, evidencing the fact that the blessed and gracious Lord does reveal himself and his word to children. "There was a man of the house of Levi, and he took to wife a daughter of Levi; and the woman conceived, and bore a son. And when she saw him, that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months."—Exodus ii. 2. How was it discerned that he was "a goodly child?" We are told that it was "by faith, Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents; because they saw he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."—Heb. xi. 23. Moses was born, and was exceeding fair (margin, "fair unto God"), and nourished up in his father's house three months.—Acts viii. 20. Here we have an instance of one who, when he was born, concerning whom the Lord by faith revealed unto his parents that he was "fair unto God," was a loved one of the everlasting God. It is thus the Lord speaks unto his bride, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."—Solomon's Song iv. 7; Eph. v. 27.

A similar case is that found recorded concerning Solomon. "The Lord loved him. And he sent by the

hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah [margin, "Beloved of the Lord"—Nehemiah xiii. 26], because of the Lord.—2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. Samson was a Nazarite unto God from the womb.—Judges xiii. 5.

We firmly believe that the blessed God has a special care of his "peculiar people" from their infancy. Thus saith the Lord, "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant [according to the election of grace—Rom. xi. 5] of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb; and even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you. I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."—Isa. xlvi. 3, 4. See also Gal. i. 15; Jer. i. 5. O how precious are the words of our God! You remember, dear children of God, the words of the dear Lamb of God, when he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26. I know your heart's response will be, Thus it was with me. I was brought by the sovereign power and grace of God to feel that I was as a little, helpless, dependent babe; and the gracious Lord was pleased to reveal the things of the kingdom, his loving-kindness and tender mercy, in my heart to my comfort and salvation; and still I find that it is as a babe that the things of Christ are revealed to me. I have no wisdom, or might, or defense, in myself.

Let us pursue our inquiry, Does the Lord reveal, make known unto those who are in tender years, to a babe upon its mother's breast, the unsearchable riches of Christ? Is there any evidence, any positive, unquestionable proof of this, found recorded in the Bible? In Psalm viii. 2 we read, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Christ Jesus, the Son of God, cited this Scripture as being applicable to "the children crying in the temple and saying, Hosannah to the Son of David." And we know that he knew the work of the Lord in their hearts, and therefore made no mistake, but spoke the truth concerning them. Why should it be questioned and thought incredible that little children, babes and sucklings, should be filled with the Holy Ghost, and experience in their hearts by the sovereign power and grace of God the loving-kindness and tender mercy of the Lord? O what sweetness have I, a poor sinner, found in meditation upon the words of the Lord from heaven, of the holy child Jesus, in Psalm xxii. 9, 10. He says, "Thou art he that took me out of the womb; thou *didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast.*

I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God from my mother's belly." When the Son of God was made flesh, he was made of a woman, made under the law. Christ was under the law a babe, a young child, a man, to redeem them that were under the law (his people, for whom he shed his precious blood, to redeem them from all their transgressions), "that we," saith the apostle "might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. And when a babe upon the breast of the virgin Mary, the Christ of God saith, "Thou madest me hope." O how blessed is this, that the Son of God, in our flesh, and when a babe, was filled with hope concerning the work the Father gave him to do. Even when a babe upon the breast, all his thoughts were upon his dear people, in whom was his eternal delight, and whom he came to redeem from all iniquity. "Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breast." Blessed Jesus, Immanuel, God with us—with us in the womb, with us in infancy, with us in childhood, with us in manhood. O Lord, we do believe that thou camest into the world to save sinners; that thou wast made flesh, and dwelt among us; that thou wast with us a babe, born of a virgin, to declare that many of thine own elect are babes. O, it is sweet to know that thou, our blessed Redeemer, when a babe upon the breast wast filled with hope; and we know that thou art able to reveal thyself and the knowledge of thy salvation to infants, babes and sucklings. Praises be to thy glorious name, that for our comfort, who have been bereaved of our little ones, that we should not sorrow as those who have no hope, thou hast revealed in the Scriptures such precious things concerning thyself in our flesh, and that thou art the Savior of infants; that thou revealest thyself in salvation to babes and children, so that they rejoice in thy salvation. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Now, beloved children of God, we are not left to mere conjectures and inferences in this matter; but we have for our consolation one unmistakable, unquestionable example of the sovereign, reigning grace of God being made manifest in a babe. In the gospel according to Luke, i. 39-45, it is recorded, "Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah, and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost; and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, *the babe leaped in my womb for joy.* And blessed is she that believed; for there shall be

a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." Might not the mother of John the Baptist be mistaken? Verily, no! for "Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost," and spake as the Spirit of truth gave her utterance.—John xvi. 13; Acts ii. 4. Jesus, speaking to his disciples, said, "Rejoice ye in that day, and *leap for joy*; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."—Luke vi. 22, 23. Here we trace the same experience of the sovereign grace of God in the elect of God in manhood. John the Baptist when in the womb was filled with joy in the Holy Ghost. We have therefore found the Scriptures bearing record of this gracious fact, that among little children, babes and sucklings, as well as among those of adult years, God has made manifest his chosen and redeemed people, by their being called by his grace, quickened, regenerated, born again, and made to *leap for joy*, in felt possession of the loving-kindness and tender mercy of Jehovah, revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. As the language in the gospel, lambs and sheep (John xxi. 15, 16), little children, young men and fathers (John ii. 12-14), declares the stages of growth in experience and knowledge of the things of Christ, so we believe it is not without signification that many of the "very elect," while infants and children naturally, are the subjects of the grace of God. "He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom."—Isa. xl. 11; Zech. xiii. 7. How comfortingly true is this in the christian's experience, and most blessedly true is it also to find recorded that our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, took "little children up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."—Mark x. 13-16. "They brought young children to him, that he should touch them. And his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Did Jesus, the Son of God, fold them in his bosom? Then who shall pluck them from his embrace? Did he put his hands upon them, and bless them? Then who or what shall disannul his blessing, and turn it into a curse? Will he himself repent of doing this, and at some future period cast them from him, and say, Depart, ye cursed? "Ah never, O no!" The blessing of the Son of God is like himself, immutable. Balaam would have cursed those whom God had blessed, but by the power of the almighty God he was compelled to say, "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord

hath not defied?" "God is not man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received a commandment to bless; and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it."—Num. xxiii. 8, 19, 20. Christ Jesus blessed infants.—Luke xviii. 15. None can reverse it. And those who are blessed of the Lord have evidence of their election in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world.—Eph. i. 3, 4.

There is an appointed time to man upon the earth; his days are determined; the number of his months are with the Lord; he has appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.—Job vii. 1, 14, 15. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die."—Eccl. iii. 1, 2. So we believe that the Lord has appointed that many of his own elect shall die in their infancy. Evidence of this we shall find in the Scriptures. When the tribes of Israel were come into the land of promise they often forsook the Lord their God, and worshiped idols, the work of men's hands; and such abominable idolatry did they practice that in the worship of the god Molech (Jer. xxxii. 35) they even sacrificed their offspring. They caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb.—Ezek. xx. These children, who were thus murdered by their parents, Jehovah claims as his own, saying, "Thou hast slain *my children.*"—Ezek. xvi. 21. Satan and hell shall never have possession of them; "for they," saith the Lord of hosts, "are mine." None can pluck them out of his hand, or separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There were young children also slain in Bethlehem; for Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceedingly wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.—Matt. ii. 16. Is there any revelation concerning these babes? There is indeed good tidings from "God, who cannot lie." Matthew, moved by the Holy Ghost, saith, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not." What tidings and consolation has the Lord?—See Jeremiah xxxi. 16, 17. "Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord: and *they shall come again from the land of the enemy*; and there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." As under the type, the land of Israel

was bereaved of its inhabitants during the time of the Babylonish captivity; the children of Israel were shut up in "their graves" (Ezek. xxxvii. 12) seventy years; in the time appointed the Lord fulfilled his gracious promise, and brought them again from the land of the enemy, to their own border; so, saith the Holy Ghost, in Matthew, of the babes slain in Bethlehem and the coasts thereof. The Lord of hosts assuaged the sorrow of Rachel, that she sorrowed not as those who have no hope. The words of consolation from the lips of the gracious God wiped away her tears; for saith the Lord, "They shall come again from the land of the enemy." The Lord hath redeemed them from death, and ransomed them from the power of the grave. Death shall not ever prey upon them. On them, as with all the ransomed of the Lord, "the second death hath no power;" for it is not possible that death should forever hold them; for Christ is risen from the dead. They are not in their sins: Jesus has purged them away in his precious blood; and "they shall come [is the immutable decree of the Almighty] again from the land of the enemy." They shall be raised up at the last day, in the fair image of the risen Redeemer; so shall they ever be with the Lord, and inherit in joint heirship with Christ an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for these children slain in Bethlehem; all, all the blood-bought of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gracious things are also declared by the Lord concerning the child of Jeroboam, the wicked king of Israel. Abijah his son fell sick, and Jeroboam said to his wife, "Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam, and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which told me that I should be king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him, and he shall tell thee *what shall become of the child.*" Jeroboam's wife did so; and concerning the child, the prophet said, "Arise thou, therefore, and get thee to thine own house; and when thy feet enter into the city the child shall die; and all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because *in him is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.*" "And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah. And when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died. And they buried him, and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet."—1 Kings xiv. 3-18. No good thing is found in us toward the Lord God of Israel by nature.—Rom. vii. 1; Gen. vi. 5; Rom. iii. 10-12. Then it is evident that the child of this wicked king was a subject of the sovereign

grace of God, a partaker of the divine nature.

Again, it is recorded, "The Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child. And David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth; but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead; for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spoke unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead; therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshiped. Then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, *wherefore should I fast?* Can I bring him back again? *I shall go to him,* but he shall not return to me."—2 Sam. xii. 15-23. David was reconciled to God's appointment of the death of the child, and by the abounding grace of God to him, a poor, vile sinner, he was enabled to worship the Lord. He now no longer "fasted and wept for the child," for he was comforted in the thought, saying, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." From the testimony of the Bible we find that God has by his revelation caused his people to believe in the salvation of "babes and sucklings;" to believe in the everlasting happiness of those dying in infancy. Job evidently was persuaded of this when in the depths of his affliction he cried out, "Why died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly? Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck? for now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest, with kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves; or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver; or as an *hidden, untimely birth, I had not been, as infants which never saw light.* There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest; there the prisoners rest

together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master."—Job iii. 11-19. If everlasting punishment were the doom of such children, if they were not saved from their sins, could he have thus desired? No, indeed! but his faith embraced the precious God-glorifying revelation of the everlasting salvation in Christ Jesus of such dying in infancy. "For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest. There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest." It was not simply and only of the body sleeping and resting in the grave that Job finds comfort in. This indeed is a precious thought; for as the flesh of Christ did rest in hope (Psalm xvi. 9), so do the bodies of those who "sleep in Jesus."—1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. But Job contemplated (we believe) that rest spoken of in Isaiah lvii. 1, 2, "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest." Could this be the condition of these babes if they were unsaved? Do the wicked cease from troubling in hell? Did Job have in his mind the doctrine of annihilation? No, indeed! for the Lord had revealed to him most clearly the doctrine of the resurrection, which he very blessedly declares, saying, "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth, and drieth up, so man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more; they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past; that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me. If a man die, shall he live again? *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come* [1 Cor. xv. 51-54]. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.*"—Job xiv. 10-15; Job xix. 25, 26. The prophet Jeremiah also expressed himself in similar language.—Jer. xx. 14-18. See also Eccl. iv. 1, 3; vi. 3. Now we are satisfied that these holy men of God could not have given utterance to such language, if children dying in infancy were damned for their transgression in the first Adam. No, they believed in the salvation of such in the precious blood of the Lamb of God.

How far does the salvation of God extend? The apostle John writes, "They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, *out of every*

*kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*"—Rev. v. 9. And in Rev. vii. 9, 10, "All nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." The only fulfillment of these words of the Scripture that cannot be broken, is found in the salvation of God's elect who die in childhood. Jehovah declared unto Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed."—Acts iii. 25. "Out of *all* nations," "every nation." Then God's remnant according to the election of grace embraced the children of those seven nations of Canaan whose death the Lord appointed to be, by their being slain by the tribes of Israel. "All kindreds," "every kindred." "All the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee; for the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations."—Psa. xxii. 27, 28. It is said that the harlot Rahab and "all her kindred" were brought out alive from Jericho. Other kindreds were left, and died in the overthrow of the city. Old and young were slain. "Every kindred." Then this declares that God's election and salvation embraces the infant and sucklings even of Amalek (1 Sam. xv. 3), whose death the Lord appointed to be by the edge of the sword.—Gen. xxvi. 12; Exodus xvii. 14-16; Deut. xxv. 19.

We have already seen that in the election of grace was one of the kindred (a child) of the wicked king Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin (1 Kings xiv. 3-13), and God claims as his own portion those little children whom they caused to pass through the fire in sacrifice to idols.—Ezek. xvi. 21. All and every nation, kindred, people, tongues, before the flood; all the families, tongues and nations of Japheth.—Gen. x. 5. All the families, tongues and nations of Ham.—Gen. x. 20. All the families, tongues and nations of Shem.—Gen. x. 31. Yea, all the families of the earth.—Gen. xii. 3. And thus while it is recorded, "All kindreds of the earth shall wait because of him. Even so, Amen." (Rev. i. 7), out of them all is found a remnant according to the election of grace, whom our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, hath redeemed by his precious blood unto God, to sing before the throne Jehovah's everlasting praise. Amen.

I feel I have but imperfectly presented this subject, but submit it to the consideration of those who fear the Lord, who will remember that all the imperfections belong unto one who is, I hope, your brother in Christ Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Canada.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., Jan. 26, 1888.

DEAR BROTHERS:—Sister J. F. Musselman desires you to republish in the SIGNS an article written by Elder J. F. Johnson. The text is Heb. ii. 14.

Also, please ask for her, What has become of Elder Wm. J. Purington?

Yours, &c.,

I. R. GREATHOUSE.

[In compliance with this request

we republish the following article, and would specially call attention to the fact that while confessing that this was presented as his own peculiar view of the subject, it was not as a test of fellowship, but "hoping that our different ideas upon abstruse portions of the Scriptures will not disturb the harmony that exists amongst us on the plain and positive points of the doctrine of the salvation of sinners by grace, and grace alone." It is evident that the beloved brother who wrote this article held in full fellowship those who could not indorse the views here given. He certainly did continue till the day of his release from the flesh to walk in undisturbed fellowship with brethren who could not accept his understanding of the text. We do not now propose to open our columns to a renewed discussion of the subject, but simply comply with the request of our esteemed sister as reported by brother Greathouse, that it may be seen how far was the design of the writer from any purpose to stir up strife among the brethren.

—Ed.]

GEORGETOWN, Ky., June, 1862.

**BROTHER BEEBE:**—In looking over the ninth number, present volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I discover that sister Lovicy Brown, of Illinois, has asked my views on Hebrews ii. 14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."

I am aware that many brethren whom I highly esteem have different views on this mysterious portion of holy writ, and therefore, what I may say on the subject cannot meet the approval of all. It is not so pleasant for those who sincerely desire unity among the children of God to write or speak on subjects, when conscious that those they love differ with the writer or speaker; but still I think the investigation of the subjects upon which we may have different ideas is proper, and often profitable to the saints when the elucidation is conducted in a christian spirit. If I am wrong, and subject that error to the examination of "Those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil," and they, thus having the opportunity, convert others with myself from the error of our way, their act is both commendable and profitable to those who are thus converted, particularly to myself, the propagator. Having this view of the subject, I hesitate not to give such views as I have, hoping that our different ideas upon abstruse portions of the Scriptures will not disturb the harmony that exists amongst us on the plain and positive points of the doctrine of the salvation of sinners by grace, and grace alone. This text, together with its connection, presents to our view some of the most important things pertaining to the salvation of poor, lost sinners. Jesus is exhibited as the

great High Priest and Apostle of our profession, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and authorities being made subject to him, there to reign without a rival, until his enemies be made his footstool, or, until all those enemies be put under his feet, the last one of which is death. From the highly exalted position, or from heaven, God has spoken to us by him, and, therefore, the apostle says we ought to give more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, or pass without due attention; because much of the comfort and assurance of the saints depends upon a careful and earnest heed of those matters; and not only that, but neglect of those important matters is wrong, and certain to bring upon us, who neglect so great salvation, the Lord's chastising rod, from which there is no escape. He then shows the dignified station in which man was placed in his first creation. Being made a little lower than angels, he was set over the works of God's hands, having all things under him. "But [continues the apostle] now we see not yet all things put under him." So signally has he fallen from the exalted position he occupied and the rule he exercised over the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, that he is made to shudder at the approach of many of them, who are permitted to tear him to pieces, or otherwise destroy him. "But [adds the apostle] we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels [precisely where man was placed] for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." Yes, he was (in the past tense) made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, but that suffering ended on Calvary, and therefore, "Death hath no more dominion over him." But we see him (now in the present) crowned with glory and honor, that he, by the grace of God (not by suffering), should (in the future) taste death for every man. So that when Arminians attempt to quote this text, "He tasted [in the past] death for every man," they pervert the language of the Scriptures by using the past instead of the present tense. This death is to be tasted by the grace of God, and alludes, in my humble opinion, not to his suffering on the cross, but to the presence of Jesus by his grace in the hour of the death of his brethren, to thus taste or take away its sting, and finally, to not only taste but swallow it up in victory, or totally destroy it so far as his brethren are concerned; and the brotherhood consists of, "Both he that sanctifieth [setteth apart] and they who are sanctified [or set apart], who are all of one [Father,] for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." In this connection then, the holy writer alludes particularly and exclusively to Jesus and his brethren—those

"many sons," which he engaged to bring to glory by the great and important work of salvation which he accomplished by taking part of the same flesh and blood of which they are partakers. In the verse next preceding the text, he says, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me." Here is portrayed a close and endearing tie of kindred relationship, or vital unity, and that relation based upon a sameness of parentage, for they are all of one Father. Christ is "The only begotten Son of God," and the younger brethren have their sonship in him, and are thus the children of God, as the children of Isaac were the children of Abraham. This sonship is a spiritual relationship, for they are all "Born of God," and "God is a Spirit," and these "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," that Paul addresses "Are built up a spiritual house, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." But as these children have a fleshly as well as a spiritual relationship, it was necessary that he should "Be made like unto his brethren," sustain a like relationship, in order to bring those "Many sons unto glory." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same."

My sister wishes to know "When the children were partakers of flesh and blood; was it in their natural or spiritual birth?" Had she asked when the children are partakers, the question would seem to me more in accordance with the text, for the apostle does not use the word *were*, referring to the past, but *are*, the plural of the present tense of the verb to be. This expression, then, cannot refer to the children as having partaken of flesh and blood originally, but in Paul's day it had reference to the then present time, and is to be so used in all time. Had he referred to the past by using the word *were*, we might, with some show of propriety, conclude that the children partook of flesh and blood in Adam, as some suppose; but I should then be puzzled to know what children they were that thus partook in that relation. The Savior says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and I suppose he meant what he said. If he did, he did not allude only to the fleshly fibres that cover our corporeal frames, but to all that is born of the flesh. In our natural birth then, according to Christ's definition, we are wholly and totally flesh, although all the component parts of the fleshly man, such as blood, bones, muscles, sinews, mind, soul, spirit, &c., make up his composition; yet the Lord includes all in the general term flesh, for all these are born of the flesh, and as before observed, "Which is born of the flesh is flesh," and Paul says, "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." Again, if they are flesh, as Christ says, what would such a partaking be but flesh?

And what more would the child be after such a participation than a fleshly one? What advantage would accrue to that child by such a partaking? What comfort could he draw from such an idea? Can we claim, by our natural birth, any vital relationship to any but a natural father or his natural offspring? On what would rest our hope of immortality beyond the grave? Is not that hope based upon a vital and indissoluble unity with Christ, that we are partakers of the divine nature as well as the fleshly one? Convince me that there are no children to partake of flesh and blood but the natural ones in the natural birth, and then my hope of a glorious resurrection, and succeeding consummate bliss beyond the grave's dreary dominion, will be paralyzed forever. Now, if the children of flesh are not the children of God, as Paul says, where shall we go to find them delineated? I shall go first, to John i. 13, for there he tells us of those "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" and I conclude that those who are born of God are the children of God? Am I not right in this conclusion? Next let us go to John iii. 6, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Are not those who are born of the flesh the children of the flesh? And are the children of the flesh the children of God? Paul says not. Are not the children of the Spirit, or those who are born of the Spirit, the children of God? I know of no spirit they are born of but God; for "God is a Spirit," and conclude, therefore, that they are the children of God. Let us next go to 1 Peter i. 23, "Being (born again) not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Is not that incorruptible seed Christ? And is he not God? Yea, "The true God and eternal life." Hear him, "Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt have no God but me; for there is no Savior beside me."—Hos. xii. 4. Is not the conclusion inevitable, then, that those who are "Born of God," "Born of the Spirit," "Born of incorruptible seed," are the children of God, and that when one of those children is thus born, that child is a partaker of flesh and blood, or, takes its residence in a body of flesh as did the Savior? Let us see whether this conclusion is corroborated by the plain language of the text: for that should always govern us in forming our opinions. "He also himself likewise took part of the same." This little adverb *also*, signifies, "In the same manner," and *likewise*, "In like manner. Now, if we can ascertain the manner in which he partook of flesh and blood, we may rest assured that it is "In the same manner," "In like manner," that his children partake of it. When he partook of flesh and blood, he "Came down from heaven," when a body was pre-

Here to the New

pared him, which served as a temple for him to dwell in.—John ii. 19-21. John saw his children, “The holy city, new Jerusalem [‘in like manner’], coming down from God out of heaven,” &c.—Rev. xxi. 1. And Paul says, “What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?”—See 1 Cor. iii. 16, and vi. 19. Moreover, which is not of the world, “in like manner,” his children are not of the world.—John xv. 19, and xvii. 16. Then, the manner in which Christ partook of flesh and blood, was to come down from heaven, and, therefore, is not of the world, but dwelt in a temple of flesh and blood. “In like manner,” or “In the same manner,” his children came down from God out of heaven, are not of the world, but dwell in a body of flesh and blood. If this is the manner in which he partook of flesh and blood, and if the children and him partake of it in the same manner, in like manner, which the words *also* and *likewise* signify, how can we suppose that the children are partakers of flesh and blood in their natural birth, unless we conclude that they came down from God out of heaven at the time of their natural birth? The idea is preposterous. Which of the two ideas is the better calculated to comfort the people of God? That is one prime object to have in view. I cannot imagine how the belief that it is only in the natural or fleshly birth that the children are partakers of flesh and blood could give any comfort, any evidence of anything beyond our fleshly relation or mortal state of existence. In that we are but the component parts of Adam, and “In Adam all die.” But we anticipate something beyond that death; still, we have nothing originating in our natural birth for that hope to rest upon. But when the child that is born of the Spirit, and which “is spirit,” is sent to take his residence in the body, and thus partake of flesh and blood; it brings the evidence of our “Adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body;” and we are then permitted to lawfully claim God as our Father, and have a testimonial of a free passport through the valley of the shadow of death, and onward to the glorious dawn of the morning of the resurrection; and a legal title to all the bliss and brilliant glory of that bright eternal day. Thus the question is solved how the children of the flesh can be put among the children that are born of God, for it is by the law of adoption that they are legally entitled to the inheritance of a spiritual patrimony, and have Paul’s assurance that, “If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” When that auspicious day arrives—

“The trump of God shall rend the rocks,  
And open adamantine locks;  
Call forth the dead from death’s dark  
dome,  
And Jesus take his ransom’d home.”

This will be the consummation of the most stupendous scene of condescension that ever was transacted upon this globe, the most amazing stoop of humility that mortals can contemplate upon. Wonderful exhibition of inimitable love! Inconceivable display of benign favor! The Son of God, though immaculate, bathed in sweat and blood and tears and overwhelmed with sufferings. “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him.” In order to accomplish this transcendently glorious work, he must be a partaker of flesh and blood, for “It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God; to make reconciliation for the sins of his people.”

And think of the majesty of him who put on this robe of flesh to complete this work of eternal salvation for poor, lost, rebellious sinners! Think of the exceeding, surpassing glory that so brilliantly adorned him before the world was, and then think of his dressing himself in a robe of suffering flesh and blood, like his brethren! Think! O, brethren! think of his dignity, his sublime parentage, think of him, “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.” What unspeakable joy, what an earnest of unutterable glory it affords us to have an evidence by the Spirit of adoption that God our heavenly Father has “Predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” But, although we have received the Spirit of adoption to evince the legal initiation of the natural or fleshly child into the spiritual family, according to the law of adoption, like Paul, and all his brethren who have received the first fruits of the spirit, we must wait for the complete and consummate adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, and groan within ourselves until our change comes; then shall we realize more fully the sublime mystery and great utility that Christ should take part of the same flesh and blood of which his children are partakers, “That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Then shall we be satisfied when we awake with his likeness, when we behold his face in righteousness. Then, and not till

then, shall we see him as he is, and be like him, and enter into the full possession of the inheritance of the saints in light—

To swim in seas of bliss, to strike the string,  
And lift the voice to our almighty King;  
To swell eternally our grateful lays,  
And fill heaven’s wide circumference with praise.

I submit the foregoing remarks first to your consideration, brother Beebe, and if you are pleased to publish them in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, to the judgment of the brethren, sisters and friends, who may examine them, particularly to that of sister Brown, hoping they will indorse or reject them as they may be responsive with, or antagonistical to the Scriptures, and still crave a place in the affections and an interest in the prayers of the saints.

J. F. JOHNSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa.

IN the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for March first brother Smoot expresses dissent from my views presented in the number for January fifteenth. He says, “I have read his argument in support of the position assumed, and have not been able to see its consistency, nor is it sustained, in my understanding, by the oracles of eternal truth.” A few days before this number of the SIGNS came I had a visit from brother Smoot, who told me that he had written in reply to me. In conversation we went over the ground occupied by me in that article; and upon my more fully explaining my views as therein expressed, and calling particular attention to some of the Scriptures referred to in support of them, he found nothing to disapprove, but acknowledged the correctness of the doctrine maintained by me. We found that it had been through a misunderstanding of my position that the difference appeared, and we were gratified to see that we held essentially the same views on every point discussed. The interview was pleasant, and I hope profitable, to both of us. It now only remains for me to give such further explanation of my views through the SIGNS as the occasion calls for; and I hope I may do it in a manner that will be consistent with the kind feelings I have toward him.

Brother S. in his letter expresses a hope that he has “written in no spirit of harshness toward any one.” Of course it would not become one to feel, much less to express, a spirit of harshness toward a brother because he has presented his views of gospel truth. If any one does not think such views sustained by the Scriptures referred to as proof, it is his privilege, and may be his duty, to point out the errors in the application of Scripture and in the argument; not with a spirit of harshness nor an undue assumption of authority, nor in a way to wound, but with meekness and fear, and with the purpose of trying to make as clear an exhibition of what we understand

to be the truth as possible, for the benefit of the Lord’s people. When a conversation or correspondence between brethren who have a different understanding of any subject can be carried on with such feelings of kindness and mutual confidence, and with such single desire to be of one mind in the truth, spiritual profit and comfort through the blessing of God may reasonably be expected to result to all concerned; but where one is engaged in merely testing the other’s soundness, though between strangers this may necessarily be the case at times, between brethren such a feeling of suspicion and of authority on the part of either would be apt to render the intercourse fruitless of good.

It is a cause for regret with me when any brother cannot see the consistency of an argument I have made, nor that it is sustained by the teaching of the word. At once I am anxious to see the reasons for disagreement, that I may know wherein my error lies, if there be error. Knowing how liable I am to err in judgment, I do feel a great anxiety that my views shall be thoroughly tested; and while there is a hurt when I find I have been in error, it is not by any means a hurt toward the brother who has shown the error to me. A mere expression of dissent on the part of any one is not of sufficient authority to cause any brother to turn from a position. I therefore looked earnestly to see what brother S. would say of my arguments, and especially of the Scriptures I had so carefully brought forward as teaching what I believed to be the truth. But to my surprise I did not find them alluded to; but through my inability to express my belief in writing as clearly as I would like to, I found a misunderstanding of my position had led him to misstate it, and to ascribe to me a belief I have never had, and which I did not know could be properly deduced from anything I have ever written. It appeared somewhat strange to me to find some arguments used in this letter as against my belief which I have myself used, sometimes in much the same language, through the SIGNS before and since brother S. has been a member of the church. All these misunderstandings were cleared up in our conversation; it is so much easier to fully and clearly define one’s position in conversation, where mutual questioning will bring out the obscure points, than in writing.

As I have twice, at least, previously presented the same views of the new birth through the SIGNS (see vol. xxxvii., p. 260, and vol. xliii., p. 182), I do not think it necessary to go over the same ground now; but will ask a careful reading of the article referred to by brother S.

I will now ask an important question, which it is very essential should be noticed by any one opposing the views I have presented. To whom does the word “ye” refer in the Say-

ior's declaration, "Ye must be born again?" What or who is the antecedent of that pronoun? To whom is the language addressed? Not certainly to that "new man" which is developed in the spiritual birth, but to Nicodemus, and all represented by him. This I think no one will dissent from, for there can really be no other understanding possible; but those to whom he is speaking are the ones who must be born again in order to see the kingdom of God. It makes no difference whether we consider this understanding consistent with our theory or not. This is what the Savior says, and this must be taken as truth, and every conflicting theory laid aside.

It is a mistake to suppose that this makes it necessary to believe that the "again birth produces a being of two distinct and antagonistic natures, the one fleshly, the other spiritual." It was the first or fleshly birth that produced or manifested the fleshly nature; and the spiritual or "again birth" which produced the spiritual or divine nature. But it is the christian, the sinner called by grace, who has been the subject of both these births, by which these two natures are manifested in him. To this Brother Smoot agrees, for he says, "The Scriptures abundantly teach, and our experience also testifies, that the christian is composed of two distinct and antagonistic natures." Each of these two natures or men, the old man and the new man, has been manifested or developed by a birth (a figurative expression, we must remember, as every expression referring to anything of an earthly character is when applied to spiritual things). It is scriptural, and therefore correct, to speak of each of these separately as born, the flesh born of the flesh, and the spirit born of the Spirit, when either is separately considered, but never so as to separate either of them from the sinner who has experienced both of them. It is he, the chosen vessel of mercy, who has been born first of the flesh, developing his earthly nature, and second of the Spirit, or from above, as the word "again" in this place means, developing his divine nature. Any theory which leaves out the sinner is a theory unknown to the Scriptures. It is a mere abstraction, leading the mind away from the only interested party. It is he, the redeemed sinner, the chosen vessel of mercy, about whom all these things are spoken, and for whom all things are. It is he who was loved even when dead in sin; for to him, even then, belonged an eternal life which was and is in Christ. It is in this vessel of mercy that this treasure is manifested. One person, in speaking of the spiritual birth, may have his mind entirely upon the new man which is developed by that birth, and another may have his mind upon the christian composed of two natures, who has been born once of the flesh and again of the Spirit; and so a misunderstanding of each other may follow.

If one is thinking of the spiritual man as the one born again, and has believed the word "again" exclusively refers to that new man, yet he must remember that such birth never by any possibility can take place except within the sinner who has been chosen unto salvation. But we do not say, nor do the Scriptures warrant us in saying, "Brother S. has a spiritual man born again in him;" but we say, "Brother S. is born again." You ask me what I think of the profession of such a man. I answer that I do not think he can see or understand spiritual things, for I have no evidence that he has been born again. This is a universal way of speaking among our brethren, whatever their position on this subject, and I have yet to see wherein it is unscriptural.

As it is acknowledged that the christian is a partaker of two natures, the question would arise, Is it scriptural to speak of the christian as a child of God? The apostle says, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."—Eph. v. 1. These followers of God are christians, and are called children. They have been called to be saints. They have an old man to put off, with his deeds and deceitful lusts, and have just been exhorted to put away various things that never can attach to the divine nature. They have a new man, a "hidden man of the heart," to put on. Peter exhorts his brethren, "as obedient children," not to fashion themselves according to the former lusts in their ignorance.—1 Peter i. 14. John says, "Now are we the sons of God." He calls his brethren sons of God while they are here in the flesh, although it doth not yet appear what they shall be. Neither he nor any of the apostles speak of the children of God as meaning the divine nature alone, but as the one who possesses that divine nature, in whom is that Spirit of Christ in which their sonship to God is, and who are to be so changed that they shall be completely conformed to the image of his Son. The children of God may so transgress as to receive rebukes and stripes. When they walk in a way that is blameless and harmless, they are spoken of by the apostle Paul as "sons of God without rebuke."—Philippians ii. 17. Brother S. says correctly that the children of God are partakers of an earthly nature, and poor, helpless sinners in their earthly standing. This earthly nature is an essential part of the child of God as he appears here in this world. It is in this earthly nature that he is to experience that wonderful change in which there shall be the manifestation of the sons of God, which is what he is waiting for.—Rom. viii. 19. It is in this earthly nature that he was involved in sin, from which he has been redeemed. The many sons whom Jesus brings to glory were so involved in sin that he had to be made perfect through the suffering of death to accomplish that work.—

Hebrews ii. 10. The church was the bride of Christ as well when involved in sin in her earthly nature, and loved with the same love, as when in her unfallen state, or as she shall be when presented unto himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. This love is proved in that he gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.—Eph. v. 25-32.

Concerning adoption, to which brother S. refers, I have heretofore given my understanding at length through the SIGNS. I will therefore only refer briefly to it here. Adoption is a legal term used in the Scriptures; not to show how any one becomes a child of God, for adoption never changed the relation of any one so that he should become the child of any but the one who begat him; but to show how the children of God in their Adamic nature can legally receive the inheritance, for that is all that adoption is legally competent to do for any one. When we examine the use of this term by Paul we shall find that the saints now are waiting for the adoption, having as yet only received the spirit of it; and that the adoption is the redemption of the body, which shall be fully experienced in the resurrection. When we refer to Romans i. 4, Hebrews i. 4, 5, Psalm ii. 7, and Acts xiii. 33, we shall find that the inheritance is the more excellent name which Jesus received in the resurrection from the dead, "the Son of God with power." In the resurrection this inheritance is fully received by the adopted sons, the sons of God fully manifested, and the use of the adoption is ended. "Waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." It is not as adopted children of God that the saints dwell in heaven, for the redemption of the body in the resurrection satisfies all the uses of adoption, and they enter there as "children of God, being children of the resurrection."—Luke xx. 36. I do not understand that there are two sons, one by birth and one by adoption, who are to be in some way blended into one hereafter, as some might be understood to teach, though I will not say that any do intend to teach it, but that adoption is used as I have suggested.

Concerning the assertion that the elect are not sinners of Adam's fallen race, which I considered in the article referred to, I will here refer again to one of the many Scriptures there used as proof that this assertion cannot be according to Scripture, and will ask this question, and insist upon an answer from any one who defends it: Does not Paul give as a reason why none can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, that Christ died for them, and God has justified them? Does not this teach, with many other Scriptures to which I before called attention, that Christ died for the elect? Brother Smoot,

in a sermon which I heard him preach last September, used this language, "Christ died for the elect family of God." With this correct expression he agreed in our conversation, and I only now refer to it to call particular attention to the importance of this truth. One who dissents from either this truth of Scripture and experience, or from the truth that the sinner is born again, will have to be constantly drilled and constantly on his guard to keep from using language in his conversation on spiritual things that will contradict his theory.

The elect have an Adamic nature or life; and also there belongs to them, even when dead in sins, a spiritual life, which was given them, with all spiritual blessings, in Christ before the world began, and which is to be manifested in them in time. In this Adamic life they are as old as Adam. In this spiritual life they are as old as the dear Redeemer. In the consideration of them as the elect, as well as the sons of God here in time, both these relationships are necessary. Those of the race of Adam who have no life in Christ are not the elect, neither are they, nor will they ever be, sons of God. Those who have that life, although it is not yet manifested in them, are sons of God, for it was sons that Christ died for (Heb. ii. 10); and because they are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.—Gal. iv. 6. There never was a time when they were not regarded by the Father as sons, and loved by him as such with an everlasting love, nor less when dead in sins than in eternal glory.—Eph. ii. 4, 5. In this eternal life, which always was theirs, is the eternal vital union of the saints with Christ. This eternal life, with all spiritual blessings given them in Christ, is manifested to and in them through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. They had to be redeemed from legal captivity before they could receive the adoption of sons. The manifestation of this life is in and through their mortal flesh. As brother S. says, "Where is the testimony of a spiritual birth aside from the fruit it bears?" All that fruit must be expressed through our mortal flesh.—2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.

The views expressed here do not make it necessary to believe that the carnal mind is changed and made spiritual in the new birth. Brother S., although intimating that in the letter, will not again ascribe that belief to me on account of what I have written; and I am sorry that any one should insist upon charging me with believing what I have for so many years steadily opposed. The flesh which is born of the flesh, and the spirit which is born of the Spirit, are and remain as distinct and antagonistic in the christian or child of God as they were in their respective progenitors before thus manifested in him, and will so remain until the glorious change in the resurrection. Elder Smoot said, "I do not be-

lieve that the carnal mind is ever engaged in heavenly themes, as Elder D. asserts." This portion of a sentence does not correctly represent the meaning of what I wrote, or what I intended to express. In commenting upon the expression of the psalmist, "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God," I said that there are times when under the controlling power of the Spirit the saints are filled with an ardent desire for the courts of the Lord, in which it seems as though even the natural powers partake. Then, after referring to the common experience of the saints, and to trials arising from doubts which at times assail them as to whether their exercises are not all natural, I say, "Nevertheless these feelings are from the spirit, and not from the flesh, although thus expressed through the flesh." Then I say, "It is the Spirit of Christ in us from which every true spiritual emotion and action flows; but that Spirit has a power that can break through, break down, overcome, and bring into subjection every fleshly power, and every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Cor. x. 3-5. "It is this quickening power of the Spirit of Christ which is in him that the dear saint experiences when the powers of his natural mind are engaged in heavenly themes, when his heart beats with joy, his face glows, and his tongue sings hosannas at the felt presence of Jesus." It will be seen by this extract, but more fully by the whole connection, that I did not mean that the natural mind ever becomes spiritual, but that the Spirit of Christ which dwells in all his people has power to control, bring into subjection and use the powers both of the natural mind and body, which it does when the Lord will. Elder Smoot asks, "In what sense can the natural mind enter into such sacred worship, especially when it is admitted that the carnal enmity is unchanged?" I answer, In no sense whatever, any more than the tongue enters into that worship when employed in speaking words of truth or singing songs of praise. I did not use the expression "enter in;" and might probably have prevented any misunderstanding of my meaning if I had used some other word instead of "engaged." When I say that the powers of thought are employed at one time upon natural things, and at another time upon spiritual things, I do not mean that, chameleon-like, those powers are at one time carnal and at another time spiritual; but that they are employed by the Spirit at one time, and are left under the control of the carnal mind at another time. No christian will claim that his tongue has never uttered foolish and sinful words since he received a hope, nor will he deny that it has been blessedly controlled by the Spirit at times to utter good and right words; but he would not think of thus asserting that his tongue is, chameleon-like, sometimes carnal and sometimes spiritual. By the Spirit

Paul kept under his body and brought it in subjection; although by that same Spirit the body, so far as any power of its own is concerned, is shown to be dead because of sin (Rom. viii. 10), "but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." When a christian walks in the truth, and puts away anger, wrath, emulation, and the like, it is that spiritual life by the power of which he does it. When one is reading about spiritual things, and comparing Scripture with Scripture, are not the same powers of thought and the same knowledge of the meaning of words engaged or employed as when he is reading a book of science? His natural mind cannot enter into the knowledge of those spiritual things, any more than the mind of a man who has not been born again. It is in its nature and disposition enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be; but it is under the control of the Spirit of Christ, even as completely as wicked men and devils, who are made to do the Lord's bidding. The powers of the natural mind, as well as of the natural body, are employed by the Spirit, when he will, as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the benefit of the Lord's people.

Certainly no one will insist that in no sense are the same powers employed at one time by the carnal mind upon worldly and even sinful things, and at another time by the Spirit upon heavenly things. Heavenly things, the thoughts of God concerning us which are so precious, the blessed doctrine of salvation, are known only by revelation; and that revelation is not to the natural mind, but to the faith of God's elect. But when we sit down to write of these things, or to read in the word of truth the record of them, or talk with each other about them, who shall say that the natural powers of thought are not employed by the Spirit in the use of fitting language, in seeking the signification of words, even as the eye is employed in reading the words of truth, the tongue in speaking them, and the natural ear in hearing them? The Spirit controls the body of the minister of truth, so that it is in the pulpit when his natural voice is speaking words which by the powers of his natural mind he has learned the literal meaning of. But these words which he thus speaks to the natural ear express what he could only know by the Spirit, and *in the Spirit*; and falling upon the natural ear of him who has been born again, if directed by the Spirit, the sacred meaning reaches the spiritual understanding, and sinks with comfort into the new heart.

If any other answer can be given to the questions I have asked, or any other explanation of the Scriptures I have referred to, it is my earnest desire to know it, for I do not want anything not taught in the Scriptures. Any dissent from these views without answering such questions, or pointing out my error in the appli-

cation of such Scriptures, can be of no importance in any candid, unprejudiced mind.

In conclusion, I ask any lover of the truth to carefully examine and candidly answer, at least in his own mind, Is there anything in this or in my former communication that is sufficient to break, disturb or mar fellowship between brethren? That is something I would be sorry to do. There are essential differences on these subjects between those professing to believe in salvation by grace. There are those who insist, on the one side, that the Adamic nature is changed and made spiritual in the new birth; and there are those who insist, on the other hand, that no change is ever wrought upon the Adamic man by which he, as a chosen vessel of mercy, is conformed unto the image of the Son of God. It is enough that there shall be a separate walk where there is an essential difference in doctrine and experience. Where there is no such essential difference, let not a brother be made an offender for a word, but let brotherly love continue.

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,

SILAS H. DURAND.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 1, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel like writing a few lines for the SIGNS to-night. All winter my heart and hands have been full caring for the sick, and I have had neither time nor mind for writing, so that my correspondence, both public and private, has been neglected. I know not how long this may continue. My wife has been at the point of death, it has been thought, with heart disease and dropsy ever since last November. Wearisome days and dreary nights have been ours; and her sufferings have been extreme. Her suffering is now somewhat relieved, but she is still very weak and low.

I want to say that I have learned more than ever to feel glad that I do not know the future, and that I am still more glad that our God does know, and has declared and appointed all my ways. The truth that our Father has foreordained and ordered every day's journey in the life of me and mine, has been an unspeakable comfort to me this winter. The trial has been most severe, but God has graciously kept me from murmuring or despairing. I have not distrusted him, though I could not see the future, it all looked so dark at times. If I had known last fall what was before me, I could not have borne it. If I could believe that my God did not know and appoint it all beforehand, I could look forward now with nothing but dread. But God does know, and all is for the best, and will work good to me in some way, I am sure. I feel now that it is a great mercy to be kept from murmuring against God. His grace alone has kept me; and I have been able to

live on just day by day without much anxiety for the future. He who takes care of the present can also care for the future. How comforting a truth "predestination of all things" is when one is in trouble. I have always believed the doctrine, but it has seemed like a flinty rock heretofore. This winter I have been able to suck honey out of it.

But I did not sit down to write much about myself. I felt like letting my kindred know how I had fared this winter. I have enjoyed many articles and editorials in the SIGNS of late. It has seemed needful to reaffirm the old-time Bible and Baptist doctrine of predestination. I am sorry there should be need for it. I am glad that it has been reaffirmed. Brother Francis has summed the matter up in a nutshell, it seems to me. His article contained "much in little." No Old School Baptist that I know of believes that God is the author of sin. I have never felt called upon to discuss the origin of sin. The Bible tells us how and when it entered into the world. That is as far back as I ever felt like going. God predestinated that the Sabeans and Chaldeans should rob Job of his flocks and herds. Job says the Lord had done this; and yet their sin in the robbery was their own. The same is true of Judas betraying Jesus, and of Peter denying him. There I am content to leave it.

I want to say also that Elder Durand's article in the SIGNS for January fifteenth commands my hearty approval. I had thought that perhaps we did not see just eye to eye upon those questions; but I could joyfully put my name at the bottom of that article. Here is just where I have stood for the past fifteen years. Not quickened spirits, but quickened sinners, are saved. A spirit needs no quickening; a dead sinner does. There is a *quicken*ing Spirit, and there are *quicken*ed men. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." These are men, sinners, and not spirits, that "have" and "have not" life. I felt also to rejoice in Elder Vail's plain and energetic letter after his trip west last fall, affirming these same truths. I am glad there is salvation for the sinner, soul, body and spirit.

May God bless you, brethren editors, and give you wisdom. I have no doubt his truth will be sustained.

I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

OREGO, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—Another year has passed with all its changes, and now as we enter upon the new year our mind goes forward, seeking for the coming events; and what is laid up in store for us is wisely hidden from our view, but is known to him who made all things, and controls every event, no matter how great or small it may be. I feel

such an assurance of this that I am satisfied often to rest quietly in his "wills" and "shalls." I am so well pleased with our family paper, the SIGNS, that I can hardly find words to express my feelings. I have had a great desire for a few weeks past to write a little to my dear kindred in Christ, and tell them, if I can, how we enjoy reading their excellent letters. It is a comfort and solace to talk of expressions which fill the heart with that holy union which none but those of like precious faith ever know. O what a favor it is to any of the fallen family of Adam, that they should be made recipients of this great knowledge. It is not because his chosen family are any better by nature. They were all under the curse. The sentence of death passed upon all, which means every one. No good work, gold or silver, sacrifice or offering, will avail. Is there not a time in the experience of all the children of God when they are brought to this place? I believe you will all say yes, with me. Still I know that some of the trembling ones cannot look back to such great deliverances and manifestations as others can tell of—cannot tell the exact time and spot; and they take it as against them, feeling that they are deceived, for it was not thus with them. Yet they give the best of evidence that they have been with Jesus and learned of him; and with the poor blind man they say, "A man called Jesus hath opened my eyes." All the Jewish ritual could not make him say anything else; for one thing he did know, that whereas he was once blind, now he could see. Then he became a pilgrim and a stranger upon the earth. Nevertheless he was seeking a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. He spoke the same language that the children of God do in these days. There ever was but one language taught them. It was a stumbling-block to the Jews in their day, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them which are called it is Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

I could speak of many who write so richly for our dear paper, and many of them we have never seen; and I feel sure that if I could enjoy that privilege they would seem like strangers no more than those we know. But as we are dwelling in this body of sin yet, and our flesh is so ready to rise up to mar our good feeling, or may be uncover a root of jealousy, I would not hurt the feelings of my dear brethren or sisters in any way. I just want to refer to dear sister Bertha Wells's letters. They are very precious to me; for her experience is so much like my own, especially in her childhood days. It filled my thoughts for hours after I retired to rest. It took me back to my earliest recollection. I, too, was brought up in the "Established Church," and even while so young it seemed like a bondage. I always felt glad when Sunday was over. It

is truly a god which the nations have set up. Yet those who have been given to know and taste the sweetness of that sabbath of rest which our dear Savior spoke of and taught his disciples, are willing to be in subjection to the powers that be, as law-abiding citizens, to live quiet and peaceable lives; and I hope there is a love and desire to follow their Lord and Master whithersoever he goes. I was glad to come to where our dear sister was

"Brought to the fold,  
With believers enrolled,  
With believers to live and to die."

I had heard Elder Bundy speak of her, and also of her trials. Yes, dear sister, it is through great tribulation that we enter the kingdom, or church. I cannot think there will be any such if we are so happy as to enter the world of immortal glory. The heavenly hosts are beyond tribulation. Their trials, doubts and fears, and all that torments and perplexes, with even Satan, the great serpent, will be left behind. What a separation! Can mortal powers look into it? Can we by searching find out the Almighty? Can frail man stop the rain or snow from coming down to water the earth? Can he stop the rising of the sun or moon? With all the boasted knowledge that is abroad in the land, man cannot change or alter one of the decrees of our God. I can, my dear kindred, truly say that I have no wish to be troubled over what the Lord does not see fit to give me an understanding of. He told me I was a sinner, and that by grace alone I must be saved. My way was to be very good, so that he would save me; but I found that my way was not his way. I trust I was led in the way that I knew not, and in paths that I had not known. I expect, if I am one chosen to salvation before time began, to be led all my journey through. When that kind and gentle hand is not felt, how soon we begin to stumble; and if we fall, it is always on the wrong side of the path. There will be bruises which may leave a scar for many a day. There is but one that can heal, which is the Lamb that was slain. May the dear Lord keep his dear children unspotted from the world. What a separating feeling there is in the heart. I feel it now, as my pen moves on to the close of this letter. I may never write another. The Lord knows; I do not. But if I am spared, I would be glad to talk to the loved ones. It seems pleasant to think of the dear household. Some that we know, their dear faces seem so near that we can almost feel their breath. The quiet and stillness of this evening brings a calmness over me. I had hoped to write a good letter, but I cannot tell. I will leave it to our dear editors to do with as they see fit. It will be all for the best, I know. I believe the love of Christ dwells among us, no jars or contentions creeping in. May this dear little church thus be kept, with all that follow after Christ.

With much love to the editors and writers of the SIGNS, and hoping that its pages may be kept clean, I remain your sister in hope,

CHRISTIANNA L. FRENCH.

OZARK, Ala., Jan. 31, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—In discussing any subject which is of a spiritual nature we should always be careful to write in meekness and love. In speaking of brethren we should be careful to say nothing that will offend the little ones. If we cannot see those deep, mystified subjects alike, let us write in a meek and brotherly manner. I do appreciate the meek and humble spirit that some brethren manifest in writing upon controverted points. There is sometimes a spirit of carnal reasoning that controls some, and causes them to try to set themselves up as the standard for the saints; and all who cannot see as they do, they are ready to rail out against them and call them heretics, fatalists, &c., and accuse them of making God the author of sin, and go so far as to say that no Primitive Baptist believes in the predestination of all things (as I heard one say in preaching); and they will urge upon their brethren to turn against those who believe different from their theory, and also write "refutations" against inspiration in order to establish their theory. This is unkind and unbrotherly, and it is not the way for God's people to live. In my association the brethren differ to some extent on the subject of predestination. The church of my membership is solid; so are those churches which I try to serve as pastor. Also, there are several preachers who preach it firmly, while others have more limited views. The Moderator of our association says that he cannot understand the predestination of all things, but says that he indorses everything that he has ever heard me preach. He often says that God controls all things in heaven, earth and hell, and works all to the good of his people and to his own glory. He preaches it strong enough for me, but he does not want it called "absolute predestination." I do not care anything about calling it "absolute;" it is strong enough. I never try to preach without preaching what I call predestination. The brethren all receive it here. The dear brother of whom I spoke, that preaches it firm enough for me, does not like the word "absolute." He is a firm and precious Baptist, and he and I get along well, and never have any hard feelings that I am aware of. The brethren of our association, and all through the south, will have the doctrine preached in its purity, and love it, as long as you call it "sovereignty." Now, brethren, I do not think we should divide asunder from those whom we love, that are sound in the faith; but they do not all understand those deep points alike. Elder Lively took a tour through here last summer, and ably preached predestina-

tion all through here, and all heartily indorsed him. I am confident, brethren, that there is a lack of understanding among the brethren. They are far from believing in a "chance" system. I do not want to compromise with error at all, but I know they firmly oppose all the popular theories of the day.

As for my part, I cannot see how any Bible reader, who has a hope in Jesus, can fix up a part predestination. I told some who were good mathematicians that if they would make a calculation of the things that God predestinated, and those that are not predestinated, then I would preach their predestination; but they have never been able to make the calculation only this far, "He has predestinated all that works for the good of his people." That is far enough. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Hence it is all predestinated. Take away the glorious doctrine of God's sovereign control over all worlds, beings and events, and I have no hope. My great trust in the time of cyclones and storms and sore afflictions is in God. I am confident of the fact that God is at the helm, and in the cyclone, and will keep us as safe then as during the calm. God was with the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, and with Daniel in the lions' den; and he did control it all, so that no harm was done. Do not all the saints rejoice in such a God, who never slumbers nor sleeps, but disposes of everything as seemeth good in his sight? How can we reply against him? "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted [not happened by chance] to destruction?" I feel to be nothing but a poor atom in the air, and am at the disposal of the great I Am. If I go to an endless perdition, and the Lord consigns me there, it is just. If he carries me to heaven, it will be mercy and electing love, in choosing a poor, vile worm of the dust.

There is none that can believe predestination, and trust any in the flesh. I often find myself almost into infidelity; and were it not for the all-pervading hand of God I would be an infidel. But bless the Lord, he controls it all. The devil, with all his malicious arts and cunning devices, cannot go beyond the bounds that are fixed for him. God brings down the proud and lofty, and exalts the poor beggar who is in the dust. He made the lion and the lamb go into the ark together; and the Lord shut the elect in, and the others were fastened out. *Præ*, before; *destino*, to fasten—predestinate, to fasten beforehand. Were not all

that went into the ark fastened in there? God fastened them in, and fastened the others out; predestinated some to stay in the ark, and predestinated the others to stay out of the ark. The same God that predestinated the building of the ark, predestinated the flood to destroy man.

I had no idea of writing in this direction; but now, brethren, if you do not see it as I hope I do, do not try to destroy me, but let us go on as brethren in the Lord, and bear with one another in this. Do not say that I got this from the SIGNS; for when this doctrine came to me I did not know that there were a hundred Primitive Baptists in the world, and never had heard of the SIGNS, nor been to a Primitive church meeting. I wondered if I should ever find any that believed as I did; but, thank the Lord, I have been blessed to find that good old-fashioned people who love the truth in its purity. Now, brethren and sisters, examine yourselves, and see if you are working for the peace and welfare of Zion. Jesus has been so good to forgive you, can you not forgive your brother? Let us be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," and ever be working to unite the dear saints. Let us bear with the weak. Let us write in a meek and humble spirit. Brethren, if I am wrong about this, tell me in meekness. I know I am poor and worthless.

May the Lord long sustain you, brethren Beebe, to send forth the SIGNS to the dear saints, richly laden with the good, solid food from Jesus.

Yours affectionately,

LEE HANCKS.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, Feb. 26, 1888.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—For some time past I have been the grateful recipient of many kind messages of love, of letters containing words of comfort, consolation, and christian fellowship. I feel unworthy of it all; but these rare gifts come to me, as do other rich blessings, from my indulgent, tender Father's hand; and though I have not one iota of goodness or worthiness within myself, I can only praise and adore the more him who is our righteousness, our sanctification and redemption.

Dear brethren Beebe, will you not kindly give me space in our household paper to say to my correspondents that though I was so much improved in health for a brief time as to cherish the hope that I might be able to answer their dear messages of love, yet for the past ten days I have been so intensely ill that I will have to abandon it for quite a time at least. For a number of days I was mostly delirious, or in a semi-unconscious state, and was constantly jerking with pain, and falling off my couch. When these awful surges of pain so envelop my whole being I am unconscious to all else. I lie helpless in the grasp of disease. I cannot pray; and only now and then does some thought of a Savior, near,

dear and ever present, come like a glad, golden sunbeam amid the dense gloom and awful pain of it all. This is one reason, dear kindred, why I so crave your prayers, because I am so often unable to pray for myself. The blessed Lord is good to me. I have all I need. If I had the wealth of worlds it could not give me health nor free me from pain. I have so many kind, generous friends, and the most devoted of brothers, who, notwithstanding my long, continuous care, both he and his wife become more kind and more devoted to me as the tedious days and nights and months of pain go on. I can never reward them, nor those dear friends and kindred who have ministered to me; but there is One gracious, love-abounding, full of goodness, who will reward and repay all. To him be honor, glory, dominion and power, now and forevermore.

In great pain, and a deep sense of imperfection and sin,

MARY PARKER.

DEAR BROTHERS AND FRIENDS:—Will you please show the book on "Resurrection" to the brethren and friends? Will the ministry commend it to the churches? Believing the Lord will bless it to every christian reader, I desire to place it in every household. It is a neat, well bound book of 342 pages, treating upon the full redemption of man, in the resurrection of his mortal body in immortality and glory, by the Son of man. A lifelike portrait of the author is in every book. The price, seventy-five cents, post paid, is low for this work. A book will be sent free to all who will kindly send a cash order for six copies. Send money by postal note; postal money order, express money order, draft on New York, or registered letter, to New Castle, Henry Co., Indiana.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MARCH 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF G. BEEBE'S SONS.

PASSING OVER JORDAN.

"AND the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."—Joshua iii. 17.

In compliance with a request from an esteemed brother, we submit such views as we have in reference to this portion of the record which God has given concerning his wonderful works in saving his typical people, and bringing them into possession of that goodly heritage which was given them by promise when the Lord called Abraham alone, and showed him the land of Canaan. In all the inspired Scriptures there is nothing written but that bears witness of Jesus as the great antitype of all the figures displayed, and as the fulfillment of all prophecy. Every correct interpretation of the wonderful record must therefore recognize the revelation of that salvation which is in Christ, as declared in all that God has revealed, whether in words or in the dispensations of his providence. Whatever else we may find in the Scriptures, if we fail to see them as bearing witness of Jesus it is certain that we have failed to receive their primary and essential meaning.

In considering the text proposed it is necessary to take it in connection with the whole record of the dealings of God with the nation of Israel. All that handwriting of ordinances, by which the natural posterity of Jacob were separated from the Gentile world, was but a shadow of things to come, but the body which cast that shadow is the body of Christ, which is his church.—Eph. i. 23; Col. ii. 17. The whole history of that nation as given by inspiration of God is but a transcript of the experience of the spiritual Israel; and the individual saints, each in the measure given them, find in their sojourn in this world all the tribulations and conflicts, as well as all the triumph and rest, which is given to the whole church in her subjection to the vanity of this temporal state of existence. Hence, when the Comforter is pleased to take of these things and show unto them the witness of Jesus in them, the saints are enabled to recognize in every incident of the inspired history the testimony of the truth of their own experience. While groaning under the oppression of Egyptian bondage the children of Israel were just as much included in the covenant which God gave to Abraham as when they were brought out of Egypt by the direct manifestation of the omnipotent hand of God. Indeed, without that long night of oppression there would have been no fulfillment of the word of the Lord as recorded

Genesis xv. 12-16. In this case alone, if there were no other example given in the Scriptures, is displayed the perfect harmony of the divine government in providence with the same sovereignty in the revelation of his salvation to the subjects of his electing love. The iniquity of the Amorites required the precise length of time for its fulfillment which was necessary for the seed of Abraham to endure oppression in the strange land of Egypt. And although both these developments of iniquity were positively declared beforehand by the word of the Lord, yet God justly destroyed the Amorites, and visited Egypt with sore punishment, for the very wickedness which he had before determined should be fulfilled by them. It is well for finite mortals to observe this evident display of divine sovereignty for the complete silencing of all carnal reasoning against the eternal purpose of God in all his appointments, and also for the assurance of those tried and trembling saints who are assailed by doubts and fears because of the prosperity of the wicked, as stated in the seventy-third Psalm. Without recognizing this essential and fundamental truth there can be no safe ground of assurance on which the hope of the conscious sinner can rest. For this cause the truth of the unlimited power and immutability of God is interwoven with every type and figure given by inspiration of God in the Old Testament Scriptures, and clearly declared by his own direct authority in the law and in all the record which he has given of himself in the whole volume of inspiration. This fundamental principle should ever be observed in seeking the true meaning of the words of every text in the Bible.

Bearing in mind the fact that this record is a part of the wonderful manifestation of divine favor to his chosen typical people, it will be seen that the same distinguishing mercy was displayed in the circumstance related in this text and its immediate connection which had so signally appeared in all their history. In this literal fact there is nothing more than what might be grasped by the natural mind; but in the great salvation which was typified by this circumstance there is a revelation which cannot be received even by the natural mind of the saints themselves, who have by faith received the manifestation of this truth as applied to their own experience. Thus the fact ever remains as it was written by the prophet and quoted by the apostle, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."—1 Cor. ii. 9. The express direction of the Lord was the power which led this peculiarly favored people through all their journey from the land of bondage to this termination of their wanderings in entering and possessing the land which had been given them more than four hundred

years before. In all their laws they were directed by the immediate word of their God. So also in the case of which our text is a part; the Lord himself gave the direction by which the ark of the covenant of the Lord was borne by the priests, and it was by his authority that the feet of those priests "stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan." These priests were chosen of God to perform the work which he appointed for them, and in every minute particular their priesthood was defined so as to accurately represent the priesthood of the saints, who are called to be unto our God both priests and kings, thus constituting them as Peter says, "a royal priesthood." It was not that those priests had power of themselves to stay the river of Jordan. They were thus signally protected from the raging current by the special care of that God who had called them to bear the ark of that covenant which he had given to his chosen nation. In this is clearly shown the principle on which his elect people are preserved and delivered from every threatening danger. It is not that they have any claim to superior power or merit in themselves; but it is alone because they are sanctified by the election of God as his chosen priests, that they are preserved in bearing the ark of the everlasting covenant, in which they are saved with that salvation which is eternal in Christ Jesus. As that covenant which was given to the natural Israel was entirely by the appointment of God, and Israel had no part in making its provisions; so in this everlasting covenant, of which that was but the type, everything is settled by the direction of God alone, without consulting the subjects of his grace.

Taking into consideration the significance of the name of the river where God gave this display of the omnipotent protection which was over his people, it will be seen that there is precious gospel truth expressed in the text. Jordan is defined as meaning literally "the river of judgment," "descending, flowing down." It is recorded that at the time of which the text speaks, "Jordan overfloweth all his banks." This very plainly expresses the truth that the divine judgment in all its force descended to forbid the entrance of the spiritual Israel into that rest which was represented by that goodly land which God gave to the natural children of Israel. No efforts of their own could have removed this swelling torrent out of the way of the natural Israelites; so no works of their own could avail the spiritual children of Israel to stem that overflowing flood of divine judgment descending to forbid their entrance into the rest of acceptance in the presence of the holy God against whom they had sinned. That terrible flood is stayed alone by the interposition of that everlasting covenant which was represented by the literal covenant given to Abraham. As the waters of Jordan were stayed by the

presence of the ark of the covenant, not only for the protection of the ark itself, but for the safety of all the people who were embraced in that covenant by which the ark was sanctified; so by the infinite virtue of that everlasting covenant, of which the promise to Abraham was but the shadow, the floods of condemnation and divine vengeance are stayed from destroying all whose names are written in that eternal election of grace in which they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

In the fact that the waters of Jordan were stayed as soon as they touched the feet of the priests who bore the ark of the covenant, the great truth is declared that it is by virtue of the blood of the everlasting covenant that all the spiritual Israel are saved from the overflowing flood of just judgment which cut off all possibility of their entering into rest. As no efforts of the Israelites could have stayed the swelling flood of Jordan, so no works of creature merit could have given rest to the conscious sinner when the overflowing flood of just condemnation interposed between him and the hope of acceptance in the sight of the most holy God. Not all the armed hosts of Israel could have driven back the waters of Jordan; but at the coming of the priests who by divine appointment bore the ark of the covenant, the flood stood in heaps to afford a pathway for the whole chosen nation to pass over dry shod, and it was "right against Jericho." It was not necessary that Joshua should find some secret ford where he might cross over Jordan without encountering the opposition of the inhabitants of the land. By the power of that God whose priests bore the ark of his covenant before them, the chosen nation were brought into the land which God had given them, not as the thief comes in the night, but as the rightful owners of that land. So the walls of Jericho were thrown down by no assault of the armies of Israel, but by the power of that God whose word was obeyed by the priests bearing the ark and sounding the rams' horns as they were commanded by him. In this, as in all the record of the wonderful way in which the Lord brought Israel from the bondage of Egypt into the possession of the land which he had given to them in his promise to Abraham, the truth and faithfulness of God is manifested, and nothing is left for his chosen people to claim as meritorious in themselves. This is in perfect harmony with the display of the infinite goodness and power of God in the deliverance of his spiritual people from the power of darkness, and their translation into the kingdom of his dear Son. They are always taught that it is exclusively by grace they are saved, and that by the power of God, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and

grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i. 9, 10. The Spirit of truth never fails to teach those who are led by it to see their own utter helplessness, and their entire dependence upon the sovereign grace of God for every ray of hope as well as for every good gift. And there is not any blessing, either temporal or spiritual, given to the saints, which is not treasured in the everlasting covenant of which that ark contained the type. If the waters of Jordan could have prevailed to sweep away the typical ark of the covenant, there would be occasion to fear that the holy judgment of God might sweep away the antitypical covenant, and destroy those whose names are therein written. But the same omnipotent God who caused the waters of Jordan to stand at the feet of his appointed priests when bearing the ark of his typical covenant, by an infinitely more wonderful display of his divine sovereignty arrested the descending judgment of his holy law by the interposition of his own everlasting covenant, which is borne by the priests who are sanctified in Christ Jesus by the direct anointing of the holy Spirit of God. These are they whom Peter designates as a royal priesthood.—1 Peter ii. 9. Protected by the presence of the ark of this sacred covenant, they are secure from all the thunders of divine justice. This is not as is vainly thought by the natural mind, that divine justice is defrauded of its righteous demand, but because that the mighty Redeemer has satisfied all the claims of the holy law as being himself the very one of whom it was written in the volume of the book that he should come to do the will of God in fulfilling all that was written in the law and in the prophets and in the psalms. All those things were written concerning him.—Luke xxiv. 44.

There is very important significance in the fact that this deliverance of Israel by the staying of the waters of Jordan was not under the government of Moses, who throughout the whole history of his rule is the representative of that law which was given by his hand. So long as he led them the tribes could not enter into their promised rest. Nor could Joshua assume the government over them while Moses was yet living. During all the time of their wanderings in the wilderness while Moses led the people, Joshua was his minister or servant. So when the Lord called Joshua to lead Israel he pre-faced the command by the express statement, "Moses my servant is dead." This was in exact accordance with the revelation of the great antitypical Joshua, who leads his people into the rest of the gospel. He was himself under the law as a servant until all its requirements were perfectly fulfilled, and then he blotted

out "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." As Joshua led the tribes of Israel into the promised rest of Canaan, so our triumphant Jesus has led his Israel into gospel liberty. And as the swelling waters of Jordan were stayed by the presence of the ark of the covenant, so it is by the blood of the everlasting covenant that divine justice has sent forth all the prisoners of Zion out of the pit wherein is no water. The miraculous staying of the waters of Jordan was a little thing in comparison with the mighty power of God by which he has made all the subjects of his grace so perfectly sinless that the all-discerning eye of infinite justice sees them holy as God himself is holy. This was necessary in the accomplishment of that work which Jesus was sent to perform. And he did fulfill the whole task even to the utmost jot and tittle. Thus the river of judgment, descending for the destruction of his people in their sins, was stayed by the priesthood of those who bear the ark of that covenant which Jesus is to all those who are represented by the tribes led into the land of promise by the power of God, as manifested in the victory given to Joshua. It is only as included in this royal priesthood that any sinner can bear this ark; and all who are members of this priesthood are consecrated by the choice of God in Christ Jesus. Against such the river of judgment can have no power, because they are protected by the presence of their Redeemer, who is the antitype of that ark which was borne by those priests in the swelling of Jordan.

#### SPECIAL OFFER.

PARTIALLY to repay our subscribers for their time and trouble, in procuring for us new subscribers, we will from now until April first, 1888, make the following offer in

#### CASH PREMIUMS.

To any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

We have received a good many new subscribers since these terms were first published, and we hope the brethren who indorse the doctrine contended for by the SIGNS will feel a personal interest in aiding in the increase of its circulation.

These terms, brethren, are really below what we can afford; but if by this means we shall double our subscription list, and by a little effort on the part of our subscribers it can be done, we will then lower our subscription price to one dollar and fifty cents per year, and run the single sheet of eight pages weekly. Let each subscriber see what he can do.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of **Mr. Evan Davis**, of Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., who departed this life on the morning of Dec. 3, 1887, in the eighty-seventh year of his age. Mr. Davis was well known by all Old School Baptists who have visited at Black Rock, either at associations or other times. He spent all of his long life in that neighborhood, and had wide business and social relations. He was naturally a man of few words, but firm and unyielding in what he believed to be right. For many years he was a faithful attendant upon our meetings at Black Rock, and always liberal whenever help in any way was needed. His house and purse were open when Old School Baptists needed entertainment or help. Hundreds of our people have partaken of his hospitality. I never knew him to attend any other place of worship, unless it were at a funeral. Yet he had never made a public profession of religion. I have sometimes in the past twenty years talked with him on the subject, but he always said that he was not fit to be a member, and that he feared that he had no saving interest in the cause. During the last few years he was unable to get to meeting often, but he still extended the same aid financially to the church that he had ever done. He said but little, but if the Bible was read, or there was any conversation upon religious themes, at once he was anxious to listen to all that was said. He suffered from no disease, but gradually weakened from old age, until the end came. It was the gentle end of a long and useful life. Two sons and one daughter are left. An aged sister cared for him in his last days faithfully and well. She is the only one left of the family, and is lonely and sad. I refer to our beloved sister **Ensa**, who for more than sixty years has been a member of Black Rock Church. Yet she has hope in her lowliness and sorrow. I feel that I have lost a warm and faithful friend in Mr. Davis. I have known him intimately for twenty years, and our friendship has never been shaken. I spoke to a large concourse of people at Black Rock at his funeral, concerning the resurrection of Christ, by which we are justified from our sins, and which is the pledge and likeness of our resurrection.

ALSO,

I enclose the obituary of **Mrs. Harriet Gill**, who departed this life at the residence of her sister, Mrs. German, near Towson, Md., on the night of Dec. 5, 1887, aged sixty-one years. Her disease was supposed to be cancer of the stomach. She had had one or two strokes of paralysis, and had been feeble and failing most of the time for two or three years. During the last weeks of her life she suffered greatly, being unable to retain anything upon her stomach. She was the widow of the late George Gill, who resided near Black Rock for many years, and died a few years since. It was my privilege to baptize our sister in the fellowship of Black Rock Church some thirteen years ago, and she has walked in full fellowship with the church ever since. Her experience was clear and full; and all her life, after the grace of God had been revealed to her, she had a lowly opinion of herself, and never felt worthy of any place in the house of God. It was my privilege to visit her twice a few days before the end, and our conversation was most satisfactory to me. She fully realized that but a few days remained to her on earth, but expressed a firm and unflinching trust in the mercy of God through the merits of Jesus. She said that she was sure that a loving and all-wise Father would do what was best and right.

I attended her funeral on Dec. 7th, in Baltimore, and tried to speak briefly of the hope that is based upon the resur-

rection of Jesus. I would like to add more, but the warmest words seem cold when we speak of the departed that we have loved.

ALSO,

**Mrs. Mary Ann Scott** departed this life at her home near Black Rock, on Tuesday a. m., Dec. 13, 1887, in the seventy-second year of her age. Her last sickness was short and severe. She had been a sufferer from asthma for many years, accompanied by a cough, yet had been confined to her bed but seldom. She was the daughter of Samuel and Urith Shawl, for many years members of Black Rock Church. She was the widow of Thomas M. Scott, who died a few years since. I have seldom met with any one to whom it was a greater delight to speak of the christian's experience and the christian's hope. She dated her experience back to the time when she was a girl of fourteen. Many times I have heard her tell it all over; yet she had never made a public profession of the name of Christ. She walked in the fear of the Lord, and the Bible was her book of books; yet she so much felt her unworthiness and so much doubted her hope that she never came into the visible church. Her daughter writes me that not a day passed that the Bible was not read by her. Her views of doctrine were clear, and yet she had kind words for those she regarded as being ignorant of the truth. She had no confidence in any human effort, but trusted in God the Savior. In character she was a frank, open-hearted and open-handed woman. Of such an one it can be said indeed, "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her," and, "Her children shall rise up and call her blessed." Seldom was her seat vacant in the meetings of the church. We shall miss her indeed. She leaves sisters and children and many friends to recall her memory as a precious thing.

I spoke at her funeral at Black Rock from the words, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

May God bless and comfort all that mourn, is my prayer.

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 3, 1888.

My dearly beloved sister, **Eliza C. Hains**, died on January 23, 1888, at 7.22 p. m. She gently fell asleep in the arms of her loving Savior, in whom she had so long and confidently trusted for life and salvation. Her disease was typhoid dysentery. She was confined to her bed three weeks and four days, and bore her sickness with christian resignation. I never heard a murmur escape her lips. She certainly did possess more patience and perfect quietness than any sick person I ever saw. She did not suffer any bodily pain, not even so much as headache or sick stomach. All she complained of was a tired feeling. The last week of her sickness she was apparently doing well, every symptom indicated a speedy recovery. Her physician was to see her on Wednesday before she died on Saturday, and pronounced her out of danger. He bade her good-by, in high hopes of her recovery, saying that it would not be worth while for him to come back unless a change for the worse took place, which he did not look for. He said the only two things requisite to effect a cure were time and good nursing. Words are inadequate to express the happy frame of mind that I was in that morning after having such a strong assurance that my dear sister, whom I loved so tenderly and devotedly, and had such implicit confidence in as my counsellor, would be spared to guide me by her counsel probably a long while yet. But alas! how soon were all earthly hopes blasted. On the following Friday night she was a little more restless than usual, and remarked to me that she would so much rather depart and be with Christ, than to stay here and suffer. I merely replied,

Sister, you have not suffered since you have been sick. She said, "O no, I know that; but I would so much rather go than stay, if it is the Lord's will to take me." I did not say anything more, because I knew that I was not willing to give her up, neither did I think at that time that I would be called upon to give her up in such a short time. She rested quietly the latter part of the night. In the morning I asked her if she did not think I had better send for the doctor. She quietly said, "No, I am only feeling weak." She remained quiet all day, noticing everything that was going on, recognizing all who came to see her, and partook of nourishment more freely than the day previous, though nothing to injure her. As late as five o'clock I perceived that a decided change for the worse had taken place. I at once sent for one of our neighbors, who had been with me more or less through sister's sickness, and one who had had a great deal of experience in sickness. She was with me ten minutes after I sent. As soon as she entered the room she said that circulation had stopped. We made use of every available means to get up reaction, but all our efforts proved fruitless. Before the doctor reached her she had passed into that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep. The doctor said all the weakness had concentrated around her heart, and that the heart did not have power to act, which was the cause of her sudden death. She was perfectly conscious to almost the last breath she drew. She called each of us by name, said she knew us all, but could not see us. I asked her if she thought she was dying. She said, "I reckon not, but I am sinking fast." I then said, Sister, if you are, you are not afraid to die, are you? She said in a very firm voice, "No." I am confident that she knew she was giving up this earthly tabernacle, but did not regard it as death. Our dear christian sister has preceded her only sister and brother, together with his wife and children, to that better land to which we are fast hastening. But I can say that her influence still lives in the hearts of those by whom she was daily surrounded; and we, too, hope ere long to join that happy band of loved ones, where no farewell tear will be shed. Sister **Eliza** was born in Loudoun Co., Va., Aug. 25, 1834. She received a hope in Christ and was baptized by Elder W. J. Purington on the second Sunday in September, 1874, and united with the church at Ebenezer, Loudoun Co., Va., at which place she remained a member until her spirit was called to that purer world remote from hence.

ALSO,

PUBLISH the death of our mother, **Mrs. Matilda Hains**, who died Aug. 1, 1883, of paralysis of the brain. She was seventy-five years and eleven months of age. She, too, like our loving sister, was ready to go when the summons came. Our mother was baptized and united with the church before the division of the Baptists. She was a firm believer in predestination. She never united with any church after the division. Mother and sister were devoted readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the doctrine which was set forth in it they believed to be truly scriptural. We have lost a devoted mother and sister, but we have the blessed satisfaction of knowing that death cannot enter that sphere to which the departed are removed. Call not back the dear departed, Anchored safe where storms are o'er; On the border-land we left them, Soon to meet and part no more.

When we leave this world of changes, When we leave this world of care, We shall find our missing loved ones In our Father's mansion fair.

MATTIE C. HAINS.

SLATER, Mo.

**Mary Richardson**, wife of James Richardson, deceased, died on Sept. 19, 1887, aged

seventy-two years, eight months and two days. She was born June 15, 1815. Her father was Elder William Morris, of Mississippi. She was convinced as a great sinner while young, joined the Primitive Baptist Church about the age of fifteen years, and was baptized by her father. She with her husband moved to Texas at an early day, and was in the constitution of Antioch Church, of which she lived a worthy member until her death. I feel to say of her that she was a mother in Israel, for she was often spoken of as such by her brethren and sisters. She always filled her seat, if her health would permit, and often would go to meeting when she would have to be helped out of the wagon and led to her seat, and sometimes to a place to lie down, not being able to sit up. She would not stay away from her meetings, often saying, "O I am so glad I can go to meeting, the place most lovely to me on earth." Yes, she loved to hear good preaching, as well as any one I think I ever saw. She was a constant reader of the SIGNS, and had taken it for many years. She loved the old editor dearly, from reading his writings, and we both wept, feeling we had lost one near and dear, when we heard of his death, feeling sad to think we could no more read his soul-cheering and able editorials. She was afflicted with rheumatism and other diseases, suffered a great deal, and was threatened with paralysis. She died with something of the kind, very suddenly; was taken one night, and died the next. She was found speechless, and never talked any more. She had said to me that she thought she would go that way, and said she wanted to tell me not to grieve when the time came, but rejoice. "Tell all of my children to rejoice, for I long to go, and be done suffering here in this world of trouble." She said she got tired sometimes waiting the appointed time, but strove hard to be reconciled to God. She read most of the time the hymn book, Bible, and religious papers and writings, which were her daily companions. She longed to see Hassell's History, and just did live to read it through. She selected the 1256th hymn (Beebe's Collection) to be sung at her burial, which was done. It is so good I give it all.

"It is not death to die,  
To leave this weary load,  
And 'midst the brotherhood on high,  
To be at home with God.

"It is not death to close  
The eye long dim'd by tears,  
And wake in glorious repose,  
To spend eternal years.

"It is not death to bear  
The wretch that sets us free  
From dungeon chain, to breathe the air  
Of boundless liberty.

"It is not death to fling  
Aside this sinful dust,  
And rise, on strong, exulting wing,  
To live among the just.

"Jesus, thou Prince of life!  
Thy chosen cannot die;  
Like thee, they conquer in the strife  
To reign with thee on high."

Her countenance looked so peaceful and happy while it was being sung, I felt a calm, happy feeling, seldom ever felt by the poor, unworthy writer. She was then laid away in the cold grave, but, we believe, to come forth at the appointed time in Jesus' image. Glorious thought. Yes, she shall live again.

DURHAM RICHARDSON.

MAGNOLIA SPRINGS, Texas.

**Lucy Rosamond Stiekney** died at her home in Slate Hill, Orange Co., N. Y., August 18, 1887, aged seventy-four years. She had been in failing health a number of years. During the winter of 1886 she had a hemorrhage of the kidneys that lasted over five months, three of which

she was confined to her bed, fainting whenever her head was raised from her pillow. No one who saw her thought she would long survive, and even her physician could give her no hope. She seemed perfectly resigned. When the hemorrhage stopped she very slowly gained strength, until she was up and around the house. A year from that time it returned, and she gradually went down. This lasted about four months, and she was confined to her bed about a week before she died. She had frequently spoken of the time when she would be with us no longer, and arranged many things she wished done. One thing remarkable was that she slept well nights all the summer, better than she had for years, up to within two or three nights before she died. Then she could scarcely speak, but remained conscious to the last. Once I heard her whispering, "Praises, sing praises." And again, the day before the last, she said, "The Lord supports us all." I felt that his arms were then underneath.

Mother was born December 12, 1812, in Sullivan County, N. Y., and joined the Presbyterian Church in Monticello in early life. She was married to Erastus Stickney October 28, 1837, resided in Westtown, Orange Co., N. Y., two years, and over forty-eight years in the town of Wawayanda. She had never heard of the Baptists until she came here to live. In 1872 she cast her lot with the few members of the Brookfield Church, always attending their meetings when able. She was gentle and lovely in spirit, esteeming others better than herself, and feeling that she was hardly worthy of a place among them. But her devotion and upright life called forth words of respect and honor from every one, and I feel that she was worthy of it all.

Her funeral was largely attended by friends and neighbors. She had no near relatives, excepting her husband, one son and two daughters, three sons having gone before. Elder Jenkins being on a visit to Virginia, brother Meredith, of Brooklyn, had come to fill his place, and kindly left an appointment and came to us, preaching an able and comforting sermon from 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, also reading the hymn I had often heard my mother sing long ago, every line and every word of which now seemed full of meaning, "I would not live away, I ask not to stay, Where storm after storm rises dark o'er the way," &c.

FRANCES STICKNEY.

DIED—In Hopewell, N. J., on February 24, 1888, Mrs. Caroline Van Dyke, aged sixty-eight years, one month and seventeen days.

The subject of this notice was a woman of sterling integrity and uprightness; and as wife, mother, christian and neighbor she showed her faith by her works; and although she had been rather unwell for a number of days, her death was very unexpected and distressingly sad to her dear husband, Deacon J. S. Van Dyke, and his family, as well as her numerous relatives and friends; for it was only a few minutes after her family saw a change before she expired without a struggle or groan. Her physician thought apoplexy was the immediate cause of death; but be that as it may, it was quickly over. The bereavement falls with great weight upon the beloved husband, as they had been living together in the connubial relation for nearly fifty years. Last April they purchased a property in Hopewell village, so that in their old age they might enjoy their church privileges, it being only a few rods from their residence to the meeting-house. But how dark and inscrutable the purpose of God, that in less than one year the loved one should be removed from the church militant to the church triumphant. She has left a husband, eleven children (seven sons and four daughters), a large number

of grandchildren, three brothers, one sister, a very large circle of more distant relatives as well as friends, and the church of which she was a worthy member, loved and respected by her brethren and sisters in the church, who will miss her very much, as trifles never kept her away from the regular appointments made by the church for public worship; and it gave her great satisfaction to see the members established in the truth of the gospel of the grace of God.

Her funeral was numerously attended on the 28th instant, at the Old School Baptist meeting-house in Hopewell village, and the pastor of the church, Elder Wm. J. Purington, officiated, using for a text the following declarations of Scripture, "A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to heart." Each clause of the text was elaborated at length, in the presence of a large and attentive congregation.

"Fearless she entered death's cold flood, In peace of conscience closed her eyes; Her only trust was Jesus' blood, In sure and certain hope to rise."

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The preceding notice was printed in the Hopewell Herald, and as our dear departed sister was such a lover of the doctrine contended for in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I forward you a copy of the same for publication, when it is convenient for you to do so.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.  
HOPEWELL, N. J., March 1, 1888.

George C. Springstead died at his father's house in the town of Wawayanda, Orange Co., N. Y., on January 21, 1888, aged nineteen years, one month and three days. His disease was measles and pneumonia. His parents mourn their first born, having only one left.

Your darling son is gone to rest; God called him home, he saw it best. His dying cry was, "Lord, forgive!" God heard, and took him home to live. Be thankful, friends, for mercy kind, Which took your boy where love's divine, To praise and sing that sweetest song; So lift your praise to join that throng.

#### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1888.

NO. 7.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE STREET OF THE CITY.

"AND the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

This is a city the like of which was never builded by man. It is upon the earth, yet has never been seen by the natural eye. It is in the world, but not of the world, nor can a description of it be understood by the natural mind. Its material, workmanship, inhabitants, provisions, adornments, with all that in any way pertains to it, are things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man." Yet there are upon the earth, and always shall be while time remains, those unto whom a revelation of this city in all its glorious perfections has been made; and every one who has been thus enabled by faith to behold it is by this token an inhabitant of it by a new and heavenly birth. "The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there."—1 Cor. ii. 9; John iii. 5; Psa. lxxxvii. 6.

This is that holy city, New Jerusalem, which John saw coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. The remarkable description of it is often referred to by men as though it were a description of the heaven of eternal glory; but although this city is called a new heaven, and her people a new earth, yet it cannot be that third heaven, the paradise of God, where Paul saw unspeakable things, for it is distinctly described three times as coming down from God out of heaven. This is the same city of which the psalmist says glorious things are spoken, and which he calls the perfection of beauty, out of which God hath shined.—Psa. xlvi. 3. Both John and the psalmist speak of it as the tabernacles of God, and both describe the same river flowing within its holy precincts. This also is the same city of which the Lord speaks by the prophet Isaiah: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But ye shall be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy."—Isa. lxv. 17, 18. Here we learn that this holy city, the new Jerusalem, is the second heavens, a created heaven, and not the eternal heaven so often spoken of through the Scriptures. As it plainly appears that the former or first heavens,

which were changed as a vesture (Psalm cii. 26), and rolled together and removed as a scroll (Isa. xxxiv. 4; Rev. vi. 14), are the legal dispensation, and the first earth is the nation of Israel; so it is also evident that the new or second heavens are the glorious doctrine and order and ordinances of the gospel dispensation, or gospel church, including all the things which God has prepared for them that love him, and that the new earth is the redeemed people of our God. Here also we learn in what sense this city in all her perfection comes down from God out of heaven. It is as having been entirely created by him. So Paul declares the same truth which is represented and taught in this vision of John when he says, "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10.

It is all that constitutes this city, not only the buildings, the walls, the gates so glorious, the foundations, the laws, the light, but the people also, which come down from God out of heaven. Some highly esteemed and dear servants of God have referred to this portion of Scripture as proof that the elect are not sinners of Adam's fallen race, but spirits, or eternal spiritual children. In alluding to what I esteem to be erroneous in the views of any, I do not feel any disposition to imply a doubt as to the reality of the experience or faithful character of such as children and servants of God, nor any lack of love and fellowship for them as such, merely on account of such errors, knowing that the strongest are as liable to err as the weakest, so far as they may be left to their own understanding. None of the Lord's people can safely follow any man. Each is taught by the anointing which he himself has received of the Lord (1 John ii. 27), even the Spirit of truth, and cannot receive anything as truth merely because presented and contended for by any man, however eminent and revered. The most eminent and faithful and comforting servants of God in all ages since the days of the apostles have had enough of error to show that they were uninspired men; and it does not become any one to present himself or any other uninspired man as authority for any doctrine or any belief, but to refer alone to the testimony of in-

spired men as authority. It is by that word that the experience and belief of each one is to be tried, and not by the views of any one else. When the Spirit of truth leads us into any precious truth, that truth will be so supported by the word that the spiritual mind of all will at once recognize it, and will see its harmony with all Scripture. When all are led by the Spirit there will be spiritual agreement and unity manifested between those who fear the Lord, as they speak one to another; between the preacher and the hearer of the word; and although many natural and fruitless opinions may have to be laid aside, sweet comfort will be experienced in that manifested unity and fellowship.

I take this occasion to call attention to the truth that only in sinners of Adam's fallen race are the glorious works of God in redemption and salvation seen. It is they who are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. It is sinners of Adam's fallen race who have been redeemed, called, quickened and justified. I call attention to the vision of Peter, wherein the same glorious truth in part is presented. What did he see coming down from God out of heaven? All manner of beasts, birds, and creeping things. Did not these represent to Peter the elect of God as they appear in their Adamic relation? To Peter they appeared vile, unclean; but God pronounced them clean, because he had cleansed them. Thus they were given to represent sinners of Adam's fallen race, such as Cornelius and his household, who were chosen vessels of mercy, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before God in love, and in time cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, called and justified. The great sheet represents the everlasting covenant. It is because they are in that covenant that they are clean. It is as having been thus chosen, cleansed, justified, as having experienced the work of grace, as being God's workmanship, that they are seen coming down from heaven. It is not as sinners that they come down from God out of heaven, but as sinners saved by grace. So far as they are seen in either the vision of Peter or of John as coming down from God out of heaven, they are perfectly pure and holy; but they must have been unclean, or they could not have been cleansed. They must have been sinners, or they could not display the workmanship of God in redeeming

them, and in causing them to experience the power of an endless life. All that in which they are now comely in his sight is from him. They are comely with the comeliness that he has put upon them. It is as having Christ formed in them the hope of glory that they are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.

It is the wonderful works of God in this salvation that are so gloriously represented in the vision that John saw. The gold and pearls and precious stones which are so abundant in the description of that holy city, New Jerusalem, are no part of the attraction of heaven to the poor sinner, nor are they introduced here to represent such attractions. But these, with all other of the richest, rarest and most beautiful, enduring and glorious things of earth, are used as figures and emblems to set forth and declare the unspeakable perfections of the church of the living God, her foundations and superstructure, her inhabitants and provisions, her laws and order, and her King with all his majesty, power and glory; of all of which the whole Scriptures continually speak in a great variety of ways. Nothing on earth can fully represent the ineffable glory and perfection of those things which God hath prepared for them that love him, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, but which he hath revealed unto us by his Spirit; yet very sweetly and comfortingly are they thus represented to our faith in these fitting emblems.

This city, taking the description of its extent literally, is twelve hundred and fifty miles in length and breadth and height. Some have taken this so literally that estimates have been made as to the number of people for whom there could here be afforded comfortable room; and the complacent conclusion has been arrived at that there will be ample accommodations for all who ever have lived or are likely yet to live upon the earth to the end of time. Some have repeated these wonderful descriptions, and dwelt upon the abundance of rich and beautiful material shown in the building and adornments of this city, as though attractions were thus presented to the people of God which were intended to inspire more ardent desires in their hearts for a dwelling place in heaven; as though anything could add to the attractiveness of the dear Redeemer, who is the light and beauty and glory of the church

here, and all the desire of his people forever.

We are to remember that the reality must always be in value and beauty far beyond the figure which represents it. How then can gold and pearls and all earthly riches and glory be thought to add to the attraction of those things which they are only used to represent? Faith is more precious than gold, and salvation more glorious than the walls that are its emblem (Isaiah xxvi. 1), though they be of jasper; and the one pearl which constitutes each of the twelve gates of this incomparable city cannot compare in value and splendor with that praise which the gates of Zion are called (Isaiah lx. 18); for this praise in our experience is an open way into the presence of our dear Redeemer, ever shining with a radiance serene and beautiful infinitely beyond the white lustre of such a wonderful pearl.

Of all the graces of the Spirit, of all that pertains to the church and the experience of the saints here in this time state, love only passes through the veil of mortality and remains forever. One who has tasted the love of God here can have nothing more presented to increase his longing for heaven. God is love, and love is the glory and blessedness of heaven; and all the brightest and most lovely things of earth but faintly represent the true character of this holy love which constitutes the infinite perfection and inconceivable beauty, attractiveness and glory of that third heaven to which Paul was caught up in the spirit, and where he saw unspeakable things, never to be uttered by man upon the earth.

There is undoubtedly a beautiful presentation of gospel truth in each particular of the wonderful description of this city; in the position of John on the great and high mountain when he saw it; in the pure gold of which it was built, like unto clear glass; in its great extent, and the perfect equality of length and breadth and height; in her light, which was like unto a most precious jasper stone; in the twelve gates of pearl, and the angel at each gate, with the names written thereon; in the twelve foundations of the wall, and the names in them. But I intended only to speak particularly of one of the peculiar features of this peculiar city, the street. It is quite common, in speaking of heaven, to refer to the golden-streets; and to the delight of walking therein; but one of the most remarkable peculiarities of this city which comes down out of heaven is that, although of such amazing extent, it has only one street. In all its unexampled length and breadth and height, no other street or lane or alley can be found. There is only one "way of holiness," and that is a highway prepared expressly for the Lord's people. No others shall ever be found in that street. It is a path which no fowl knoweth. The vulture's eye hath not seen it. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous

beast shall go up thereon. The unclean shall not pass over it. But the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.—Isa. xxxv. 8-10; Job xxviii.

7. The wayfaring men who walk this street are all fools in the estimation of worldly wisdom, yet they shall not err therein. They walk by faith, not by sight.—2 Cor. v. 7. This faith is well represented by gold, but infinitely exceeds gold in value and preciousness; for through it all true wisdom and understanding are ours, and all the blessed realities of salvation, and all the unimaginable glories of heaven; and these are more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold.

This way of life and holiness is not to be found outside of this city of God. The Lord's people are often tempted to doubt whether they are in the way; but these temptations only come through the flesh, which desires to see with natural sight. When faith is in lively exercise how clear the way appears, how plainly it is seen, and what holy confidence we feel that we are in the way. No harrassing doubts arise at such a time to mar our comfort or disturb our peace, but the truth of salvation is presented to the view of faith in all its clearness and beauty; and all the order and ordinances of the church are seen with wonderful and precious distinctness, while a holy and ardent zeal is felt to walk in that lovely way, to walk in all the truth and ordinances and commands of the dear Redeemer. That which is transparent easily admits light through it; and whatever beauty there is in the transparent object is discovered by the light which comes to us through it. So this street is transparent. Out of every ordinance and good work in which the Lord's people are to walk God shines. We see their beauty and loveliness by the light which shines through them from our God. Every child of God sees the way in which the Lord calls him to walk for himself. While the minister of the word, or some other, may first call his attention to the command as given to him, he does not receive it as a command to himself because so pointed out by another, but because of an experience within his own soul. The street or way is pure gold, and he who is called to walk in it is rich in faith. This pure gold is as it were transparent glass. The light of divine truth sweetly and clearly shining through it causes us to see its golden quality, its infinite value, purity and beauty. At such a time the poor soul is not looking anxiously forward to a period when he may walk in some golden streets, but is feeling the joy and comfort and blessedness of walking in the golden street now, even though such a thought has not occurred to him. He is experiencing a spirit of

thanksgiving and rejoicing that he is so highly favored as to see and love the way, and to have the sweet privilege of walking in it. What an unspeakable blessing it is for a poor sinner to be enabled to walk in Christ Jesus the Lord, who is the Way, to walk in his precepts and ordinances. At such a time we can see how all the great company of the redeemed which no man can number, all the general assembly and church of the first-born, are walking in this same street, in this same truth, in this same hope, in this same love, in this same salvation, in this same path of the just, which is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. At such a time we get a sweet glimpse of the blessed reason why John saw but one street in all this city of God, and why that street was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Within this city made all of pure gold, like unto clear glass, is the throne of God and the Lamb, from which proceeds a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, and whose whole extent is within the city. A throne is the place of power. From the power of God proceeds salvation and every spiritual blessing. The gospel itself, which is glad tidings to the poor, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. This river is for the comforting and refreshing of the inhabitants of Zion. All the truth of God, all the precious doctrine, every promise, every spiritual blessing, are in that river whose streams make glad the city of God. None but those who are in that city are made glad by the truth, which ascribes all the power and wisdom and salvation and glory and praise unto God alone, and none whatever unto man. If any one rejoices in what is thus represented by the waters of this river, if the doctrine of election and predestination and salvation by grace is ever sweet and refreshing to him, as cold water to a thirsty soul, if he has a will and desire to drink of these streams of holy truth, this is an evidence that such an one is within that city whose walls are salvation, and unto him it is said, "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." None but the people of God have any will, any desire, for that doctrine that ascribes all power to God. That water that comes from his throne is not sweet and refreshing to the natural man. They desire to speak and hear of the power of man.

A wonder is seen in this city which cannot in any way be made to accord with a literal understanding of the description. There is a tree of life here, only one tree, yet it stands in the midst of the street of the city, and at the same time on either side of the river. How shall we understand the situation of this tree? We cannot solve the apparent difficulty by any process of reasoning; but when the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows them unto us, we shall see order and beauty and har-

mony in all. Christ is the tree of life; and he is found by every wayfaring man in the midst of the way, the centre and source of all the beauty and power and attraction in all the order of the church of God, in all the precepts and ordinances, and all the good works in which it is the privilege of his children to walk. A child of God cannot walk with any comfort in any way in which he does not see Christ. There is to him no joy, no healing power, no blessedness, in any doctrine, in any duty or privilege, only as he can see and taste this tree of life in it. We cannot otherwise be sure of a doctrine or duty or privilege. We cannot be sure that we are walking in the right way, in the street of pure gold, in the good works which God before ordained that his people should walk in, only as we have this evidence, seeing the tree of life in the midst. Jesus is the substance of all heavenly things, and in the midst of all. He is in the midst of the throne (Rev. vii. 17), in the midst of the church (Heb. ii. 12), in the midst of Zion (Psalm xlvi. 5), in the midst of the inhabitant of Zion (Isaiah xii. 6), and as a tree of life is in the midst of the street of the city, and in the midst of the paradise of God. How sweet is his fruit to the taste of the wayfaring man, who walks in the law of the Lord. In the keeping of his commands there is great reward.

This tree is on either side of the river. He is in all the types and prophecies of the legal dispensation, and in all the teachings and ordinances of the gospel. Whether seen in the legal ceremonies, types and parables, which pointed to this river of salvation from the old dispensation, or in the gospel teachings and ordinances, which show the river fully manifested, he is a tree of life unto his people, whose fruit is sweet and nourishing; and with every recognition of him some healing power is felt to the joy and rejoicing of the soul. The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations of the redeemed.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 25, 1888.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., March 2, 1888.

G. BERBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—In the SIGNS for March first I notice a request from an aged sister, R. P. Helm, that I should present some thoughts through the SIGNS upon two texts of Scripture, one the parable of the "treasure hid in the field" (Matt. xiii. 44), and the second the cry of those slain for the testimony of Jesus under the fifth seal, recorded in Revelation vi. 9-11. If I knew the post-office of our aged sister, I should feel like writing privately to her such suggestions as might occur to me, because upon both Scriptures much in former years has been said and much written for the SIGNS.

The first text, the parable of the treasure hid in the field, has sometimes, it has seemed to me, been entirely perverted by anxiety to sustain

some peculiar view of the matter of salvation. I realize in myself a tendency in the same direction, namely, that instead of coming to the Bible as a humble, sincere learner, willing and ready to be taught by the Holy Spirit just what any Scripture may mean, I often find myself searching the Bible to find texts by which to bolster up a preconceived notion. For the reason of this weakness in myself I ought to be kindly and forbearing in my thoughts toward others, who it seems to me unwittingly do the same thing. In giving such thoughts as have occurred to me concerning this parable, I hope no one will think that I mean any controversy with those who differ from me.

While some of the parables of Jesus seem to me to present one especial phase of the kingdom of heaven, others are many sided and apply in many directions. The most of the longer parables seem to me of the former class. Beneath the narrative detailed at length one special thought shines out. On the other hand, the most of the short parables seem to me to belong to the latter class. A brief natural truth is stated in a few words, but the treasures of meaning are many and various; and sometimes the Holy Spirit may open up one view to us, and sometimes another.

Again, parables are meant to reveal, like illustrations which we all use, and use for the same purpose, and not to conceal truth. Jesus accommodated his words to our weakness. All words are but accommodations, because divine things are in themselves inexpressible. The natural man sees only the word, the form, of the parable, the natural thing of which the parable speaks; while to the spiritual man it is given to know what the parable means. The natural man sees only natural things, even in the word of God; but to the spiritual man it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

Again, we learn by the types of the law, the figures of speech in the prophecies and these parables of Jesus, that what we see tells us of what we do not see. The natural world, stones, trees, birds, fish, men, and all the daily business of this life, all continually preach to us of the life beyond. The poet was not so far wrong when he said there were "sermons in stones and running brooks." The trouble is that while all creation about us declares the glory of God and his eternal power and Godhead, we are so blind and deaf that we neither see nor hear. Yet the testimony of God and his upper kingdom is there. In all the parables Jesus in effect says, The things which you see are the works of the same God who created the better world which you do not see; and as are the things which you see, so are the things which you do not see. So no one ever saw or could see the real beauty of this lower world

but the child of God, who sees revealed in it "the eternal power and Godhead."

So as we approach this parable we may be sure that as is the natural thing narrated, so is the spiritual thing that is meant. This occurs in the midst of a cluster of seven parables, all illustrating some matter pertaining to the kingdom of God. I wish, first, to call attention to one difference between this parable and the one which follows it, that of "the pearl of great price." In several things the two parables seem alike. In both we have the great value of the treasure set forth; in both the finders give up everything for the one thing; in both those who find this most valuable thing recognize its value as being supreme. But there is one difference between the two. In the second parable the merchantman is seeking goodly pearls. This has become his business. In the first parable this idea is omitted. A man perhaps plowing the field stumbles, as we would say, upon a hidden treasure. It is not said that he was seeking the treasure. The treasure had been hidden in the field. The man who found it did not hide it there, else it could not have been said that he found it, and no need would have existed for the purchase of the field, and no occasion for such joy. The man is filled with gladness that he is so enriched—unexpectedly enriched.

It has been thought that both parables represent Christ seeking, finding and purchasing his church. I cannot so understand it; for Jesus knew just where his people were. It is true that he is represented as seeking and finding his lost ones; but this refers more to the personal experience of grace, when the Lord begins to lead his people about and instruct them, than to the work of atonement by which they are purchased. Again, in both parables there is no intimation of any prior ownership, either of the treasure or the pearl. In both cases the purchaser possesses something he had never possessed before; but Jesus redeemed or bought back his lost ones, who had been given to him in the covenant of redemption. So I am driven to conclude that the parables are not intended to illustrate the atonement, but some other thing in the kingdom of heaven.

Again, there is one other difference between the two parables. In the first the "treasure" is the central thought. In the second the "merchantman" is the central thought. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure." "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman." These are the openings of the two parables. In the first we contemplate the value of the treasure; in the second the mind, purpose or desire of the merchantman.

Those who have regarded the merchantman or the finder of the treasure as representing Christ, have had two different views of the treasure

and the field. Some have thought the field was the world, and the treasure the elect in it; but I have yet to be convinced that Christ has purchased the world in order to redeem his elect out of it. Some again have supposed the treasure to be the new man, and the field the old man; but when Jesus redeemed us I have yet to be convinced that there was any good thing hidden within us.

"What was there in us that could merit esteem,  
Or give the Creator delight?"

It is true that God had set his love upon us; but the wonder of it all was that he should love sinners, and not a rich treasure hid within us. The wonders of electing love have respect to sinners, and to sinners only. It would be no wonder if Jehovah loved spirits bearing his own image; but he loved men with no good thing in them. This is the wonder of wonders. Both of these theories seem to me inconsistent with the whole doctrine of grace, as seen in the atonement.

I regard the two parables as bringing out two types of christian experience. The latter parable might be illustrated by Simeon, who was looking for Jesus, and at once yielded all for him, and counted nothing of value besides him. Simeon was seeking goodly pearls. He knew their beauty and value. God showed him the pearl of greatest price—the pearl of pearls, and every other pearl was lost sight of in the desire for this. The former parable might be illustrated by the instance of Paul. He was not seeking pearls. On the contrary, he did not want them. He looked for no treasure in all the field where he was working; and, lo! sudden as a flash of light the heavenly riches burst upon him; and as he beheld the sudden glory thus revealed to him, he also was ready to give up all for Christ. To him after this all things were dross, that he might win Christ, and be found in him. His worldly prospects of honor, fame, riches, his self-righteousness, all seemed mean to him now, compared to the glory of this Savior thus revealed to him. He could henceforth say, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

There are the same differences in christian experience now. Some speak of long and anxious seeking before they find real peace in Christ. Others speak of a very careless life, until at last the beauty and excellence of heavenly things to some extent are seen. One knows that he is seeking pearls, but fears that he may never find one to satisfy his need. He hears of Christ, but fears that Jesus will never be his. The other is a wanderer. He is not satisfied, and cannot be, and yet he knows not where to look for peace, or whether there be any peace to look for. But as he wanders through the fields, like the spouse through the city by night, he finds the great treasure. It is a wonderful surprise, and all that he has is he ready to give for it. This man has the joy of an unlooked

treasure—the greatest joy of all. Until he found it he did not even know that there was such a treasure. It seems to me that Nathanael and the woman at the well of Samaria are instances of such as find the treasure in the field unexpectedly.

Those who find this treasure are not dead men. There is in them a power to perceive the value of the treasure, and to enjoy it. The ox that might plow this field and unearth this treasure would see no excellency in it. So brutish man may read about Jesus, God, and all heavenly things, but it is all no more to him than a clod of earth. But what value does the spiritual man see revealed to him.

There was no compulsion in buying this field, except the compulsion of joy. "For joy thereof." How exactly like the experience of the child of God is this. What he does he does for joy. If he reads the Bible, joins the church, preaches the gospel, gives alms, visits the sick, it is all a treasure which causes joy, and not a burdensome debt which he must pay. Here in one word is the whole spirit of the gospel of Jesus expressed. So Paul gladly gave up all, that Christ might be his; and Christ alone was all and in all to him. What was all the world to you, brother or sister, when you first saw Jesus? What is all the world to you now when you think of Jesus?

This is the treasure. What is the field? May I not answer, Anything where we find Jesus to be? His word, his ordinances, his church, each believer. Do they not all make up the field? We love the word of God, the ordinances of God's house, the church, each individual believer. And why do we love them, and sacrifice so much to possess them? Is it not simply because we see Jesus in them all? For joy of Christ Jesus we rejoice in his temple where he shines forth. For the companionship of christians and the privileges of the sanctuary, how many have not counted even their own life dear unto them. I understand this to be what is meant by selling all for the treasure. It must not be understood in any gross sense of barter or trade.

Thus I have sketched a few thoughts concerning this wonderful parable. If they shall prove of any interest or comfort to the dear aged sister, it will be because she can see Jesus the treasure in what I have written.

With regard to the second text, Revelation vi. 9-11, I can say but a few words. The cry of the souls slain for the testimony of Jesus has always associated itself in my mind with the parable of the unjust judge. At the end of that parable Jesus said, "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry unto him day and night?" Here the souls of the slain are represented as crying for vengeance. The leading thought does not seem to me to be a desire for revenge, but rather an expression of wonder that God, holy and true,

should so long bear with persecutors and blasphemers of his name. Our time is not God's time. This at least is one lesson that we learn here. I confess that I have never been able to find any satisfaction in trying to look into the history of the future. I do not by any means question the right of others to investigate the future if they can, but my mind has not been led that way. I feel as though the present is all that I can live in. The book of Revelation has been and is largely a mystery to me. I frankly confess that the time of the opening of the fifth seal I do not know; and I will not discuss where the altar is. One or two things appear in the text. They had been slain for the testimony of Jesus. Their souls were in the presence of God. They were in communion with God. God heard them. He was not angry at their cry. They are blessed of God. White robes are theirs, tokens of honor and favor. They are bidden to be patient until their brethren and fellow-servants for whom it was appointed should be killed. Here also we have implied the doom of the wicked at the last. Vengeance will fall when the purposes of God in the wicked are fulfilled. These are all lessons for us who live yet on earth. May it be said to our souls also that we should rest until the purpose of God is fulfilled, and all his martyrs have been crowned. How often have the people of God been impatient and grieved at the apparent prosperity of the wicked; but here we are bidden to rest. God's purpose both for the righteous and the wicked shall not fail. I have not been greatly troubled by the present turmoil, nor by fears of the future. God has here bidden me rest, and he reigns. This is enough.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

#### PROVERBS XVI. 4.

"THE Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." "The just shall live by faith." We then can say that all Scripture is designed to set forth the acts of a just and righteous God toward his creatures; and we know of no higher law than God himself, who is the creator of all, and the disposer of all. We also read of "his pleasure;" and we believe that his sovereign pleasure is the rule of his acts; for he "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He is God, and besides him there is none else. He made all things in heaven and

earth, and he made them all in wisdom; and the infinite wisdom of God is displayed as much (in proportion) in the serpent or the beast of the field which the Lord God had made, as in the dove, the emblem of innocence. And why? Because each fulfills the deep and holy design of the eternal God, who rideth in his excellency on the sky. The text of Scripture in the record of God above cited should quiet all cavilers against God's immutable ways, which he in infinite wisdom has designed and brought forth. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." It is a good rule in life to follow, never to say a thing is not so unless we know it to be false. That the word of the Lord is deep, none who know will deny; for the apostle Paul tells us that "great is the mystery of godliness;" and this we know. While we may learn the letter of the word, if we do not know the spirit of it we are ignorant at last. If the written word were what some claim for it, we could by searching find out God. We know that the things of God are written; but the Spirit reveals the things of Christ, and searches the deep things of God. We would be utterly unable to know God in his true character without a revelation by the Spirit. That the Lord does reveal the deep things to his ministers, no true child of God will contradict. For me to set myself up as judge, and decide what God has revealed to another brother, would be presumption and folly in me, which I hope the Lord may preserve me from. We read in Isaiah, "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein." "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isaiah xlii. 5; xlv. 24; xlv. 7; xlv. 10.

Do we believe that God would make anything that he had no purpose in? Who will thus charge God with folly? We know that this is a deep thing, but simple faith takes hold of God's own declaration, trusts in God, and relies not on the results of mere carnal reason, which has always arrayed itself against God. If I were asked if the walk of the child of God was by sight (carnal reason), I would answer, No; but by faith in what God has said; for "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the

children of the flesh, but the children of promise, if we have faith; and as such we believe all that God has said in his word, however adverse it may seem to carnal reason. If Abraham had stopped to reason as some do now, he would have said, No, I will not offer up Isaac, for if I do I will become the murderer of my own child; and God is not the author of sin. If I do so it will make God the author of sin; and for fear his character will suffer, I will stay at home with Sarah. For this Isaac is the only heir; and if he is slain, all the seed will be destroyed. But not so; he obeyed God, and God displayed his wisdom, provision and justice also. For one, I do not feel that the Lord has sent me out to vindicate his character, for it needs none. He is God. "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." He made Pharaoh, and surrounded him with all the advantages to be just what he was, and designed him to oppose his plan; and he destroyed him in the Red Sea. "For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." We have no doubt of this; and if we did we would doubt his word. Why he did it was that his name might be declared throughout all the earth. It was done, and it is yet to the child of God one of the sublime acts of his power; and we, like Miriam, sing the song of deliverance from his hand. How often has this become the stay of comfort to the children of God, that God can do all things, and that nothing is impossible with him. The Lord makes the storm and the calm; he forms the light and creates darkness. All things are made by him, and all that comes out of the earth. Christ is spoken of as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. What slew him? Was there no sin considered and counseled in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God? The various beasts in creation are diverse one from the other. One flies, one crawls, one lives on another, some are one color, some another color. What a wonderful variety—the tiger, the large bo-constrictor, the huge rhinoceros, the little ant and the bee, the alligator, the sea-serpent, the whale—all in their order fulfilling the grand end for which they were created; for all things were created by God, and for his pleasure they are and were created. Had there been no law, there would have been no sin; for sin is the transgression of the law; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Sin is here, and it is manifest; and we are consoled when we read, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Therefore we conclude that sin belongs to the creature, and not to the Creator; for sin is the transgression of the law. God is the author of law and the source of law, and therefore above law. If you or I kill a man, we are sinners; but if

God destroys a nation in a day, it is no sin nor wrong; for he is God, and besides him there is none else. We should bow with reverential awe, and know that he can create and destroy. The writers who were inspired wrote God's will, and wrote what was needful for us. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made."—John i. We must believe, if we believe in an all-wise God, that nothing small or great arose out of contingency which he did not counsel or have a counsel concerning. Solomon says, "Without counsel, purposes are disappointed."—Prov. xv. 22. When we consult Paul, he speaks of God's counsel, and also of his eternal purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began. We also are obliged to believe that everything which God created is fulfilling the purpose for which God in his counsel and purpose determined beforehand. If we are at all in doubt as to whether he had any purpose concerning the wicked acts of men, we have but to read what Luke records as the words of Peter, a preacher of the doctrine of Christ. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."—Acts ii. 23; iv. 27, 28. We read again, in Isaiah, "It pleased the Lord to bruise him." "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways and thoughts higher than ours. The thoughts of his heart stand to all generations. He is God, and there is none else. Just and righteous is the Lord. He is our Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. "Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." He is also said to harden whom he will. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" The predestinarian says he has; but the Arminian says, No; the clay makes itself a vessel unto dishonor. "Let God be true, and every man a liar." I take God's word, and trust him for his grace. I do not believe that the good works of Jacob, nor the evil works of Esau, affected the Creator of them both. And Paul so teaches, for he says that God loved Jacob and hated Esau before they had done good or evil, that his purpose according to election might stand; and, thank God, it does and will stand, and I have not the remotest fear that one of the eternal purposes of God will ever be frus-

trated; for he is God, and besides him there is none else. Again, we read, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—Col. i. 16, 17. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Rev. iv. 11. We need no more testimony to establish the fact that all things are created by God, and nothing is excepted; therefore nothing exists without his will. Even invisible (unseen) things were made by him; and we may as well cavil about invisible things as about the deep ways of the Lord. If the Lord had not intended for us to consider these things, they would never have been so plainly written in his word for us. Do not the thief and the murderer have their being from God? Could not God withdraw that being if he willed? Yes. Therefore he has a will for them to exist. He can do what he will with his own, and none can hinder him, or say, What doest thou? You may hear the Arminian say that if he does so and so he is unjust. We can only say, as did Paul and Isaiah, "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begetteth thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?"—Isaiah xlv. 9, 10. We are further taught that the Lord giveth no account of his matters. It is enough for us to know what he teaches us of his will. Why he does it is with him. We must stand still and know that he is God. The stupendous plan of salvation has never yet been understood in all its fullness, nor will it be. We may be brought, like Paul, when blessed with the visions and revelations, to say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Who hath known the mind of the Lord? Who hath instructed him? If the Lord had had no purpose in evil, he would never have created it. We go into a vast building of machinery. We see one wheel turning one way, and one wheel turning in the opposite direction; but both wheels are turning out the vast purpose for which they were made. The wooden wheels and the iron wheels are both serviceable, and the grand master workman understood it all before the wheels were made, their place and their performance; but any one who knew but little about it

would think they were tearing up creation. But not so; they are all controlled. One does not go too fast for the other, although they turn in opposite directions, and are in different parts of the building; and one large wheel turns them all.

"The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." The devil and all evil is the background from which God in his infinite and eternal pleasure draws the photograph of his church, his redeemed; for he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Sin is necessary in the economy of God, and in harmony with his inscrutable purpose and unsearchable wisdom. It was not so as a virtue in itself, but as God chose this means to reveal his character to his children in an appreciative sense. By this God chose to display his perfections to his people, that they might know justice and mercy, and view and enjoy his love to them.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

BLANCO, TEXAS, Jan. 6, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—In the December number of the *Gospel Messenger*, one of the editors indorses the following, purporting to be from Dr. Gill, as containing his sentiments on predestination, to which, with your approval and consent, I wish to call the attention of your readers with a few observations.

"Though God may be said in some senses (for instance, to bring about a great good, or to punish other sin) to will sin, yet he wills it in a different way than he wills that which is good. He does not will to do it himself, nor to do it by others, but *permits* it to be done; and which is not a bare permission but a voluntary permission, and is expressed by God's giving up men to their own heart's lusts, and by suffering them to walk in their own sinful ways.—Psalm lxxxi. 12; Acts xiv. 16. He wills it not by his effective will, but by his *permissive* will, and cannot therefore be charged with being the author of sin. He neither commands sin, approves it, nor persuades to it, nor tempts nor forces to it; but to the reverse, he forbids it, disapproves of it, dissuades from it, threatens punishment for it; and besides, overrules it for great good and for his own glory."

I shall copy no more at present, if at all, as the sentiment of the whole, in the main, is embodied in the foregoing. I will proceed to point out in a concise way some of the most gross inconsistencies and want of harmony with the divine perfections and the Scripture teaching; for to my mind they are paradoxical and self-contradictory. It is said that God wills sin in a different way than he wills that which is good. But whether this variation in his operations is

owing to extraneous circumstances arising from his having constituted his creatures independent actors, is not stated; but what follows seems to indicate that he did so constitute them; for it is stated that God does not will to do it himself, nor by others, but permits it to be done. From this premise it seems that God's operations must assume every possible shape that the exigence of his deivable creatures (though independent actors) might render necessary. But it is said that it is not a bare, but a voluntary permission, and is expressed by suffering sinners to walk in their own sinful ways. From this it appears that God, the Creator, had no determinate will toward his creatures until they developed their true character by sinning, as it is said that his will is expressed by suffering them to walk in their own sinful ways. If so, God's acts are conditioned upon the acts of his creatures. It is said again that God "wills sin not by his effective will, but by his permissive will, and cannot therefore be charged with being the author of sin." As effective implies certainty of accomplishment, and permissive implies merely granting it, and as these two terms are used as expressive of the author's sentiments, by contrast, so he rejects the first, which implies certainty, and accepts the latter, which must necessarily imply doubt, uncertainty or contingency. But if he should deny the consequence of his premise, why reject the premise which secures the certainty of accomplishment? That is, if he rejects effectual, and accepts ineffectual agency, as to the introduction and reign of sin, and yet insists that doubt, uncertainty or contingency does not result from his premise of permission, but is certain of accomplishment, then I would ask, Upon what does such certainty rest—upon the free will of man, or upon the appointment of God? We know the first cannot be true, because there could not be any certainty in the future actions of independent actors; but if it be said, as the Scriptures teach, that man is not independent, but dependent, then he acts from first to last in subserviency to the will and purpose of God. If the foregoing reasoning be just, what becomes of the empty cavil founded upon the supposed injustice of God's willing what pleaseth him, and accomplishing all he wills by such agencies as he ordains to that end? So we see that, taking into consideration the concessions of brethren who seem to differ, God is as chargeable with being the author of sin in one view of it as another. For the will of God being eternal, it cannot be mutable nor dependent, as implied in the term permit.

It is further said that God neither commands, nor approves, nor persuades to, nor tempts to, nor forces to sin; but to the reverse, he forbids it, disapproves and dissuades from it, and threatens punishment for it. Words are signs of ideas, in the use

of which we hold intercourse with each other. Then if I were to see my child or friend pursuing a course that would lead to their ruin, and were to entreat and dissuade them from it through mere pretence, and not from a solicitude for their welfare, I would act treacherously, and would be censured as a dishonest man. Then in what a ridiculous light would the great Sovereign of heaven and earth appear, supposing he acts upon principles so ignoble even in mere creatures. But if it be said that he was not acting upon such principles, that he was not trifling with nor mocking his creatures, but was acting in good faith of purpose and will, then what becomes of his omnipotence? And if that has failed, what becomes of his Godhead? For sin has entered and reigns, notwithstanding God's endeavors against it. Is it not more consonant with the divine perfections to suppose that God's will is peremptory and indefectible, and will be effected by means of his own appointment, without depending on the acts of any of his creatures, whether good or evil, as he decreed the means as well as the end?

It is further said that "God hardens some men's hearts, as he did Pharaoh's, according to his decreeing will, but not by any positive act in infusing blindness and hardness, which is contrary to his purity and holiness, and would make him the author of sin; but by leaving them to their natural blindness and hardness; and therefore God, as he decreed, gives them up to their own wills." Here again it seems that God's decree is predicated upon the acts of his creatures, which is not only absurd in itself, but absolutely impossible; for God's decrees are eternal, and therefore cannot be conditioned upon the acts of his creatures in time. Though the evils of sinning follow as a consequence of the act, they are not a condition of God's decrees, as implied in the language quoted above. And if God hardens men's hearts through the corruption of nature, by which they, as said, are already hardened, there would be no special hardening in the case of Pharaoh, as all other men's hearts were hardened in the same way his was. But the inspired apostle teaches different; for he says, "The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the whole earth." Then as God raised up Pharaoh in order to display his power and declare his glory, the cause or condition could not be in Pharaoh, who had no existence until God raised him up, and that according to his eternal purpose, to accomplish which he hardened his heart, and brought upon him and the people of Egypt all the calamities written in the Scriptures. So there is a marked difference between Pharaoh and other men, as to hardening their hearts.

It is further said that God hardens men's hearts "according to his decreeing will," yet "not by any positive act in infusing hardness and blindness in the hearts of men, which is contrary to his purity and holiness, and would make him the author of sin." As to the mode or process by which the Creator and Governor of the world imparts or causes blindness and hardness, it is not my province to inquire; but being fully persuaded by the inspired word that he does so, it is both my duty and privilege to believe it, and not tax to the utmost my inventive powers to devise a plan for my Sovereign to regulate his conduct by in order to avoid the charge of guilt as being the author of sin. For it seems that some use their utmost endeavors to veil or hide the acts of infinite wisdom and purity behind what is termed second causes, for fear the divine holiness will receive a stain; in doing which they (though undesignedly) impeach him in his wisdom, power, independence and immutability, and consequent right of dominion over the creatures he has made. For if his plan of government was not drawn in wisdom, and is executed by omnipotent power in every minutia, and in all its details, without the aid of his creatures, he would be neither all-wise, all-powerful, nor independent, and necessarily mutable in his perfections and limited in his sovereignty. The author says that for God to infuse or impart blindness and hardness would be contrary to his holiness and purity. He begins at the wrong end of the chain to measure the character of his Sovereign and to infer conclusions; for the inference supposes that God can do wrong, and must regulate his conduct by a certain prescribed rule, in order to be right; though the rule suggested very aptly applies to us creatures, as a test of our characters, as our character is indicated by our conduct, as that of the tree by the fruit it bears. Our Creator having given us a rule to regulate our conduct, our conduct is considered right or wrong (that is, morally good or evil) according as it agrees or disagrees with the given rule. Not so, however, with our God, whose will is his only rule. Whatever he does, therefore, in pursuance of that holy will, is in the most absolute sense intrinsically right, whether we can discern its congruity or harmony with our view of the divine perfections or not. Here then we begin at the source of the action, to ascertain its character, knowing that perfect rectitude cannot err. Here we should rest, be still, and know it is the Lord—adopt and act upon the God-given adage, "Let God be true, and every man a liar," and not exercise a captious spirit at the counsels of heaven; for how vain, and in what a ridiculous light we appear, when attempting to arraign our sovereign and bring his acts and the motives of his will to the test of human scrutiny. Would it not be

better to bow and be resigned to his will in all his goings, though his footsteps be hid and his ways past finding out? In reference to the sin and fall of Adam, it is said that "God decreed it; but that the sin of eating the forbidden fruit was not owing to God, for he forbade it, was displeased with and resented it in the highest degree; and that God *permitted* or *suffered* Adam to sin; and that our first parents, with the full consent of the will, without any force upon them, took and ate the forbidden fruit." Are we to understand from this that though God decreed the fall, he took steps and used his endeavors to prevent it? as it is said that "he was displeased with it, and resented it in the highest degree." Then according to the tenor of the language employed, does it not appear that there is want of harmony between the will of decree and the will of accomplishment, seeing God was displeased with and resented the act necessary to accomplish the decree? And would it not follow from such premises that the fall and consequences formed no part of God's original plan of government over his creatures—that the fall of Adam and his race did not form a link in the chain of events necessary to the accomplishment of God's purpose in creating the world? If not, then the success of God's government will depend upon a long series of fortuitous and fluctuating events, the legitimate result of contingency, accident, &c. And in order to such a state of things, it is, or seems to be, supposed that it was necessary to endue Adam with independence and absolute liberty of will, so that his act being independent of his Creator, and giving hope to all future events, his Creator could, in harmony with the holiness of his character, in this way and not otherwise fasten the charge of guilt upon Adam and his race, and by hiding behind second causes avoid the charge of guilt as being the author of sin. Is it not more compatible with the infinite perfections of our God to suppose (as the Scriptures teach) that he accomplishes all his decrees by suitable means or agencies, as applied to their respective objects, as the means were no less decreed than the end? And though Adam acted without any direct force upon his will, yet in common with every mere creature he acted in subserviency to the will of his Creator, as God does as seemeth him good, even with the wills of his creatures; for an "independent creature" is a misnomer, as the term Creator implies sovereign dominion, as "creature" implies dependence and accountability; and this relation is sufficient grounds for all of God's acts of sovereignty over them, without inquiring how certain acts of his consist with his infinite perfections. Though God for his own pleasure created and formed all his creatures, he imparted to none of them his own essence; neither is he mixed with them; but he being infinite, and all

his creatures finite, they are all equally (that is, infinitely) inferior to and removed from him, from an angel to the smallest atom of matter. So Satan is just as dependent as any other creature. As all power resides in God, and as no action, whether good or bad, can be performed without power, therefore all power to act is derived from God. In this view of the subject God is just as much the "author of sin" on the contingent plan as otherwise; and the empty cavil founded upon it falls to the ground. And though Adam acted, and we act, in perfect subserviency to the will and purpose of God, yet was his act sinful, for which his Creator by right of sovereignty held him, and now holds us, responsible, and dealt with him, and deals with us, accordingly. The covenant plan of salvation, with all its accompanying blessings, were founded upon and in view of the fallen and miserable state of God's elect. Furthermore God either willed the entrance and reign of sin, or he did not. If he did not, his will has failed; but he says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." If he did, the will is peremptory and certain of accomplishment. To evince the justice of the remarks wherein some of the most glaring inconsistencies of the foregoing confession of faith are noticed, I will refer to a few of the many Scriptures that bear testimony. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." "Man's goings are of the Lord." "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." "Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directs his steps."—Prov. xvi. 1, 4, 9; xx. 24; xxxi. 1; "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth whithersoever he will." "He [God] is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth."—Job xxiii. 13, 14. "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."—Psalm xxxiii. 11. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself."—Jer. x. 23. "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said, He [God] hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart."—Isa. vi. 9; John 9-40. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand."—Isa. xv. 24, 25. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"—Lam. iii. 37. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"—Amos iii. 6. "Thou couldest have no power against me at all, except it were given thee from above."—John i. 9, 10. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" That is, fit one for destruction, and prepare another for glory. "The election hath obtained it [that is, salvation], and

the rest were blinded." He works "all things after the counsel of his will." "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. ix. 21, 22; xi. 7, 36; Eph. i. 11. When set in competition with such an array of divine testimony (though a very small sample of the harvest that teach the same), what is the most exalted piety, the most brilliant talents, and the most acute and profound penetration? As saith the apostle, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 9, 10. Neither does the belief of great multitudes avail anything against the inspired teaching; for in comparison with others, the witnesses for the truth have always been very few, a "little flock." Gideon's army was too large till reduced to three hundred; and the Lord had one prophet to Baal's four hundred and fifty.

I have written but little of what was on my mind, but it must suffice for the present.

JAMES WAGNER.

OCCOQUAN, Va., Feb. 1, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of some of the dear brethren, if the blessed Lord will be with me, I will give a sketch of some of my travels in the past six or seven years. I know that if the Lord does not guide my mind I cannot write what I desire; for what is produced by the natural mind is but fleshly.

I was born and raised in Prince William County, Virginia, and from my first recollection had serious thoughts about death, and what would become of me after death. I often tried to pray, and thought I was a praying one. One night I dreamed that the world was coming to an end, and everything was to be burned with fire and brimstone. Like other natural children, I thought I could change myself, not understanding that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and who has already predestinated all things. I began praying every night, and continued to do so for some time; but as the world did not come to an end, I became careless about praying. After some time the thought of death came with double force, and what would become of me after death? For a long time my mind was exercised in the same way, until, as I hope, the Lord opened my blind eyes to see what I was by nature, a poor, lost perishing sinner, in the sight of a holy and just God. It was then I went to work, to work out my salvation, and labored as hard as any poor sinner ever did. I prayed and begged God to have mercy on me, a poor, perishing sinner. I went on in this way for some time, hoping to find some relief; but instead of getting better, I grew worse and worse, until it pleased God to take from me one of my children, and then I had two troubles on my mind. All I could do

was to roam about in the woods and seek some lonely place, and there beg God to pardon my sins, which appeared like mountains before me. I was like the children of Israel when they crossed the Red Sea, my sins pursuing me. One evening I thought my last time had come. I saw the grave opened for me, and O what an awful state of mind I was in. All that I could do was to walk about and beg God to spare me until I could have some evidence of my sins being forgiven. During this time I went to Quantico to meeting, and heard Elder Smoot preach. I thought he had taken his text for me, and for no one else, until he came to speak of the sinner's deliverance, and there he left me still in the dark. That day he came home with me and my mother, and we had a short conversation; but I was afraid to talk to him on the subject, although I said something that attracted his attention. I was in an awful state of mind, and thought that mine was altogether an outside case. I wearied on in this way for another month. On the fifth day of July, 1836, I thought surely my time had come. I told my dear wife that the time had come for me to leave her, and that she must do the best she could. I sent for my mother, and when she came she asked me what the matter was. I told her I was about to die, and everything I had ever done and said was before me, and I had to die on account of it. She commenced laughing at me; but I thought she was trying to bluff me off, and that she knew I was going to die; and O the awful thought of death, and going down to the everlasting hell. Then the thought came that if I would go to work I could work it off my mind. So I went to the woods to work at hewing timber for a barn. I labored for some time, but my burden grew worse and worse, until finally I sat down upon a log to die. I do not know how long I sat there, but while I was there these words came to me, "Be still, and know that I am God." This gave me some comfort, although I did not know that the words were in the Bible. I thought, Now I will have some peace of mind. But before night came the burden returned with double force, and I felt like I was forsaken and despised by everybody. What to do I did not know. I thought I would go to Occoquan and see Elder Smoot, and see if he could tell me what was the matter with me. I went into the woods to get a load of railroad ties, and when I got there I thought surely my time had come to die and go to that awful place of torment. I saw Satan, and that awful place prepared for the wicked, and the black smoke boiling up out of that place. But I saw something between me and that place. It seemed as though the Lord was there, and I believe he was. If he had not been there, I certainly would have been carried down into that awful place. O the awful state of

mind I was in at that time! No tongue or language can describe the feelings I had at that time. How long I was there I cannot tell. Satan was ready to devour me, and hell was opened for me. There seemed no way of escape. I cried, "Lord, save me, or I perish." Then the words came again, "Be still, and know that I am God." Also, "Fear not old Satan." How long it was before my mind came to me, I do not know; but when I came to myself I was looking upward toward the heavens, my burden was gone, all that I saw in the vision was gone, and I found myself praising God for delivering me out of the horrible, long-expected torment which I had thought was my everlasting doom. O what beauties I saw in the Lord! and I was singing praises unto his holy name. I wanted everybody to join with me and help praise his holy name. I could see the church of God, and I looked upon them as a poor and afflicted people. I wanted to talk with some of those people, and started for home without my load. When I reached home I told my wife that I never intended to do any more work, and that I did not want to live here any longer. My mother being an Old School Baptist, I thought I would go and tell her how happy I was, and of what I had seen. I started, but before I reached there something said to me, "Don't you tell that, for you are deceived." Then I began to wonder what this meant, and I began trying to get my burden back, so that I could see which way it went. I wanted to know for certain how it left me. I did not want to be in doubt about it. But I never did get that burden back; yet O how I longed to see how it did go. That brings to my mind the blessed Savior's words, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Although I was so happy, and felt so sure that I was born again, I was afterward left in doubt as to whether I was or not; and to this day my greatest trouble is as to whether I am born again. Sometimes I think I will give it up; but there is a spark that kindles when I hear gospel preaching, and that gives me some hope that I have, like Jonah, been down to the bottom, when out of the belly of hell he cried, and the Lord heard him. I cannot give up my hope. It holds me, instead of my holding it. For a long time I kept all to myself; and if the Lord had not compelled me, I would have been out of the church yet. I feel to hope that the blessed Lord made me willing in the day of his power; for I was working by myself when the words came to me, "Let your light shine, that it may be seen of men." I wondered what it meant. I pondered the words, and directly the answer came, "Arise and be baptized." I thought, Why, I am not fit to go with that people, al-

though I long to be with them. For six or seven months I went with my head bowed down, hoping to be perfect in all things I did or said. One day I was pondering the Scriptures, and the words came to me, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him." I did not know that the words were in the Bible, but I went to the house and found them. I read them, and found that the seed was the Spirit of God. The Lord opened my eyes to see that there are two distinct natures; one the flesh, the other the Spirit. The one wars against the other, and I am brought into captivity, making me cry, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And the words came to me, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." These words gave me a great deal of comfort; for I thought that surely the Spirit was leading me. I found that I could not work flesh and blood into the kingdom. Yet I thought that after all it might be that I was deceived, and I thought I could live as well out of the church as in it. Finally I heard Elder Smoot preach, and his preaching was so plain concerning the new birth, the old man and the new man, that I could not keep from telling him that it was the truth. O how I longed to be numbered with that people. When the next church meeting came, two sisters talked to the church, and I thought I would tell what I hoped the Lord had done for me; but it seemed as though I was nailed to the seat, and could not move until the congregation was dismissed. Then I thought that was the last opportunity I should ever have, and I went home mourning and grieving because I had failed to do my duty. I thought surely I could not live until the next meeting day. When the day came I thought it the most beautiful sight I ever beheld. To this day I see a great beauty in those two sisters, although I see more beauty in every one of the members than I see in myself; for I sometimes fear that I never knew anything about God's work. If I am saved it is all God's work, for of myself I can do nothing.

I went on from November until March, when Elder Smoot came home with me from the Quantico meeting, and we had a talk on the subject. He told me that I never would have peace of mind until I went to the church. I told him I never intended to do that, unless the Lord compelled me. This was on Sunday, and there was to be a meeting at Occoquan on Wednesday. When the day came I went to Occoquan, and when the preaching was over an invitation was given. I went forward and spoke a few words, was received, and baptized that same day, in the presence of a large crowd of people. I felt perfectly happy, and thought I never would doubt again. Until the next morning I was perfectly happy. Elder Smoot left that morning, and

after he left I felt that I had committed an unpardonable sin. I went home with my head down, Satan being with me; and for four or five days he followed me, telling me that I was nothing, and I believed him. I thought I was altogether mistaken, and that at the next meeting day I would go and ask the church to drop my name. I begged God to show me if I was deceived or not, until I sank almost in despair. I was about to sink, when the Savior reached forth his hand, lifted me up, put my feet upon a rock, removed the dark cloud from before my face, and I was made to rejoice and praise his holy name. I then could say, with Paul, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." If I know my heart, I do love that people. The longer I live the more beauty I see in the church, and the more love I have for the members. All the real pleasure I do have is when I am with that people. If I know what christian love is, I do love the holy name of Jesus. I firmly believe that God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he has made all things for his own purpose. Without him we can do nothing. We cannot think a good thought without him. Just as many, no more, no less, as he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, will be saved. He saw and declared the end from the beginning, and when the last vessel of mercy is called from nature's darkness into his marvelous light, time will be no more. Mortality will be swallowed up, and the redeemed will be gathered to that eternal, unchangeable home, where there will be no sin, no trouble, no doubting, but all the church of the First-born will be employed in praise and blessing forever.

Brethren Beebe, please pardon me for writing such a lengthy letter. May God direct and guide you in all your labors, is the prayer of the least of all saints, if one at all. In hope of life beyond the grave,

JAMES POSEY.

STATE ROAD, Del., Feb. 23, 1838.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have no reason to doubt but that there are readers of the SIGNS who are willing now and then to find my name among the correspondents. Personal acquaintance will sometimes awaken an interest in communications which they would not otherwise possess. My mind has been somewhat fixed of late on the sentence of Scripture in Second Corinthians v. 17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The most serious and important question that ever presented itself to the minds of men, "What it is to be a christian," is dealt with here by the apostle. Prophets and apostles throughout Old and New Testament times have dealt with this question. Yet it still has to be solved anew with each individual for him or herself;

and throughout all the after life will present itself again and again for further and more thorough solution. If to be a believer depended upon our own volition, or upon duties and services performed by ourselves, this need not and would not be so. We would at all times have our standing and the evidence of it under our own control. But if to be a Christian is to pass from death unto life, and to be a passive subject in the hands of God, wrought upon by his holy Spirit, then it becomes a matter of faith. A work of grace would necessarily wrest us from reliance upon works and duties, and turn our minds and thoughts toward that work that was being wrought in our hearts. A work that is not under our control, and of which we can have no satisfactory knowledge until we experience it, leaves us more or less in anxious doubt as to the great question whether we are his or not. We are as dependent for satisfactory evidence as we are for the work itself. I am of course aware that much has been written bearing more or less upon this subject; and it is not to discuss or argue questions that arise, aside from the main point, that I make this attempt, but rather to get at the testimony contained in this and other similar portions of the word.

"If any man be in Christ" is here to be understood in an experimental sense, as the same form of expression is used in that sense in several places, as in Second Corinthians xii. 2: "I knew a man in Christ." And in Romans xvi. 7: "Who also were in Christ before me." Again, in First Corinthians iii. 1: "I speak unto you even as unto babes in Christ." To be experimentally in Christ is to be a recipient of the benefits of his mediation, and a subject of that salvation that is in and through him. The phraseology evidently suggests some uncertainty and doubt about a very important matter which the apostle is aiming to solve; and he deals with it in such masterly manner as we might suppose would settle it forever and set it at rest. This passage leaves no room for discussion as to whether Christ is a whole and complete Savior, as it contemplates the sinner so identified with Christ as to lose his own identity, and to be viewed and justified and accepted in Christ. In the righteousness of God as revealed in Christ is his standing. In order to estimate a work of grace we shall have to examine and try to understand the subject of it. Almost all disputations in the religious world have arisen from a misconception of the condition of the sinner. If the saying is faithful and true that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, the matter for us to understand is what sinners were as sinners, and what they are when saved. If we knew just what a salvation was required, we would know just what a Savior Christ is, as being the salvation that is provided, and just the

salvation of which every believer is a subject.

The expression, "He is a new creature," leaves no room for an idea of a partial work, or a division of the man. Whatever was old, depraved, lost, and under condemnation, is new, cleansed, saved, and delivered from wrath. By the things that characterized the sinner in his sins, we might understand what the apostle calls the works of the flesh; and they are not only as old as he is, but as old as sin itself. They are all old. None of the new things are found among them. The affections are worldly and selfish. Sin reigns over them, and they are willing and obedient servants. Characterized as enemies of God and truth, their thoughts, words and actions are under the control of a principle of depravity and of alienation from God. The apostle goes on with the idea of an entire change. "Old things are passed away." If all things appertaining to the depraved sinner were included in these old things, and all the things of that character are passed away, it would be hard to say what of the old former life was left. All this involves the question of what Christ is as a Savior, or what his salvation is in the sinner's case. What will be the condition of the saved sinner when Christ becomes or is made unto him wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption? May it not be said, As Christ is, so will he be? The salvation proclaimed in the gospel is not merely a salvation from perdition or punishment, but a deliverance from the power and dominion of sin. I will not attempt to dispute a single point with the apostle here. Whatever and everything included in his term, "old things," he says have passed away. The prophet probably means about the same thing where he says, "I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh." He that turns the hearts of the children of men, as the rivers of water are turned, has bound the strong man, and the desires and affections and all the motives and promptings to action and enjoyment have undergone a change.

"Behold, all things are become new." We may now divide and subdivide and multiply the apostle's term "things" as much as we are minded to; whatever they are, and whatever is included in them, have all been embraced in this redemption work, and they are all new. The only question then that need to remain is what these new things are, and wherein they differ from the former old things, and how they are developed in the life that is not according to men in the flesh, but according to God in the Spirit. I remember to have heard it said that the Scriptures did not use the word "change" in this sense. I will not say that they do; but I will not question the fact of a change because the word does not occur, when old things pass away, and all things become

new. I would not think that any one who had been made conscious of their own depravity, and had seen and felt the sinfulness of sin, would want to raise any question about a change. It is above all things what they want to see and feel. "All things" would be too many things to look over in one article, but I will try and notice a few prominent ones.

The apostle, addressing his brethren, reminds them of their having been once enlightened, and of what they encountered after that they were illuminated. He moreover says that they were some time darkness, but now were they light in the Lord. The apostle John seems to make the solution of the question turn upon the principle of love to God. Love to anything presupposes a knowledge of that thing, and of excellency, beauty and value in that thing. As God is a Spirit of purity and holiness, love to him would embrace not only what he is in himself, but what his salvation is in the poor sinner's case. A salvation that raises him from the thralldom of sin and from the sense of deserved wrath, and gives him to realize that Christ is his Redeemer, is a salvation that he cannot help but love. The work of grace in his heart has wrought a spirit of obedience, of devotion, of humility, and of endeared relationship to the brethren. Elemented to all that consecration of heart and life to the Lord's will required of him, he loves everything upon which the seal of the work of grace is set. "The law of his God is in his heart," and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death. He loves that salvation of which he is the subject in every development of it. All this love and enjoyment is new, and the life lived in these things is a new life. What election and predestination are, and what their importance to us, seems to me to be shown in the salvation of the sinner. If we cannot find out what predestination and election are in their results in the salvation of men, we shall look in vain elsewhere. "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," &c. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." In the provisions of an everlasting covenant for the redemption, exaltation and eternal glory of the fallen sons and daughters of men, we find what is expressed by these terms, election and predestination. They reach to where men were as children of wrath, and embrace what men are and will be as saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. If this work is God's work, he will be glorified in it. It is worthy of him. It

bears witness of its authorship. Its end is conformity to the divine image. It is to be regretted, if it is so, that ever any subjects of saving grace should even appear to differ in regard to the character and authorship of the work that hath been wrought with them. I have been surrounded and confronted all through the forty years of my public life by religionists who were setting at naught or discarding in one way or another this work of the holy Spirit of God, and going about to establish a work of the sinner's own instead. If salvation is a personal work, wrought alone by the Spirit of God, then all religious systems, with all their results that depend upon the sinner's own volition and works wrought by the depraved sinner himself, are builded upon the sand, and utter ruin awaits them. I will not suspect any one who is a subject of that grace that reigns through righteousness unto eternal life allowing himself to be enlisted among those who are opposing it, as the way and only way of life; but I sometimes meet with expressions that I think of doubtful propriety. I mean among those who are fully identified with the doctrine of grace, and are engaged in the exhibition of that doctrine, and of the blessed fruits of an experience of its truth, they will remark in summing up that the sinner's nature is not changed. "There is no change in the nature." They certainly do not mean to question the reality of the change, or the sincerity of the subjects of it. It will not do to suppose that they mean that those who through all their life exhibit the fruits of the Spirit are hypocrites, and that these fruits are merely put on, and not the product of a good tree. It is more likely a mere thoughtless mode of expression. Those that by nature were children of wrath and enemies in their minds, yet now hath he reconciled, the enmity slain. There can be no greater change than from death to life; and it will not do to dispute the record that God has given of his Son. The record is that he hath given to his people eternal life, and this life is in his Son. If it would do to suppose people candid when they claim that there has been no change in themselves, we might ask what their profession was, or why they professed at all; or, with the apostle, challenge them whether they did not know that they had professed to be dead unto sin, and had in consequence went forward publicly and been buried. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

This work of the Holy Spirit I have been laboring for years to set forth, and have found a blessed reward in the response it has met with from very many hearts. The fruits, which are said to be love, joy, peace, &c., I have seen to abound; and for the honor and glory of God, as well as for the joy and comfort of saved

sinner, I have continued unto this day witnessing none other things than Moses and the prophets did say should come. All these things the apostle applies to those brethren to whom he was writing as things fulfilled in them; and he contemplates as a happy consummation to which reigning grace has brought them that, "Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."—Romans vi. 22.

Yours in waiting and hope,  
E. RITTENHOUSE.

BOOK NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:—Will you please show the book on "Resurrection" to the brethren and friends? Will the ministry commend it to the churches? Believing the Lord will bless it to every christian reader, I desire to place it in every household. It is a neat, well bound book of 342 pages, treating upon the full redemption of man, in the resurrection of his mortal body in immortality and glory, by the Son of man. A lifelike portrait of the author is in every book. The price, seventy-five cents, post paid, is low for this work. A book will be sent free to all who will kindly send a cash order for six copies. Send money by postal note, postal money order, express money order, draft on New York, or registered letter, to New Castle, Henry Co., Indiana.

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BACK NUMBERS.

OUR supply of back numbers being exhausted, we can no longer fill orders for them. We printed several hundred copies extra, but they have all been sent out, and new subscribers will now be commenced with the number at which their subscription is received, and dated a year from that time.

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WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF  
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

PERVERSIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

MUCH more frequently than we have opportunity to attend to them, requests are received calling for expositions of texts which have been so distorted and misapplied by opposers of the doctrine of the gospel that their true and plain meaning is hidden from honest seekers after truth. Upon most of such portions of Scripture the mind of any unprejudiced reader would not be at a loss to detect the fallacy of those misapplications if the literal record were carefully observed. Yet so dark is the natural understanding that the clearest and most positive declarations of Scripture are misapplied, and made to sustain sentiments and theories directly the opposite of what they really contain. It is in this way that the words of inspired writers are made to seem to sanction such a multitude of conflicting doctrines as now prevail in the Babylon of professed christianity. In considering the subject of religion men seem to lay aside even the natural ideas of consistency with which they look at any other matter. While they will acknowledge that it is the most important and serious theme to which their attention could be given, they are ever seeking some less weighty subject for their thoughts. Hence, there is no field in which false teaching is so readily accepted by the people as the doctrine of the gospel in which God has revealed the only way of salvation for sinners. The world of false teachers is very industrious in propagating the various systems of humanly devised doctrines, so that in the dark cloud of their popularity it sometimes appears as if the little flock of the saints would be utterly hidden from sight; but since they are kept by the power of God they cannot be overcome nor destroyed. The power of God, through which they are so securely kept, is the name of the Father, according to the prayer of our suffering Redeemer, as recorded in the hour when he was delivered unto death. In that prayer he asked, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are."—John xvii. 11. It must not be forgotten that the Father always heard the prayer of Jesus.—John xi. 42. Hence, what he spoke in prayer is just as surely fulfilled as is the word which goes forth from his eternal throne in the majesty of his almighty Godhead. When this fact is regarded as unquestionable, there will be little difficulty in seeing all the divinely inspired testimony as harmonizing in the declaration of the immutability of his counsel, and the fulfillment of all his purpose.

As several of our more recent patrons have requested our views upon portions of Scripture which have been repeatedly discussed in our columns, we will briefly refer to some of them again, that the inquirers may know that we are willing to comply with their wishes as far as we can without republishing articles which most of our readers would find but a repetition of what we have already published.

The first text to which we will now refer is Matthew xxiii. 37, which is often cited as evidence that the will of God to save sinners was in that instance defeated by the stubbornness of the Jews. In order to make it appear more consistent with this false doctrine, the text is often misquoted as if it read, "How often would I have gathered you together," &c., "but ye would not." Then the argument is urged that as in that case the purpose of God to save the Jews was defeated by their obstinacy, so others whom God designed to save may be lost for the same cause. While this would give no trouble to sinners dead in sin, and destitute of the love of God, it does prove a very serious distress to those who feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin in their own hearts. To such living subjects of grace the last vestige of hope would be destroyed by the belief that their sinfulness could alienate the love of God from them. If but one of all the redeemed people of God could be lost, there would not be one of all that innumerable company but that would anxiously ask, "Lord, is it I?" It would thus darken the hope of every saint. But the truth which our Lord declared in that awful sentence, when he announced the desolation of Jerusalem in this text, is clearly manifest by the statement in the following verse, in which he says, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." A house is only left desolate when every living inhabitant has been taken out of that house. This was the state of the doomed city. Until the last vessel of mercy was taken out of the natural Jerusalem, it was preserved for the sake of the chosen one who remained there, just as Lot must be taken out of Sodom before the destroying angel was able to pour out the storm of fire upon that wicked city.—See Genesis xix. 22. So it is written, "Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not: for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there."—Isa. lxxv. 8, 9. From this declaration of prophecy it is evident that the desolation which our Lord announced as having come upon Jerusalem in the text was the fulfillment of the prophecy cited from Isaiah, which was written by the moving of the Holy Spirit seven hundred years before it

was visited upon that nation. In all their generations the Lord did gather the elect children of Jerusalem together, and in every case it was contrary to the will of the natural children of Abraham. Hence Stephen demanded of the Jews, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One."—Acts vii. 52. Thus all the gathering together of the children of Jerusalem in all ages was contrary to the will of that nation, yet the Lord was not defeated in his purpose of love and mercy by the carnal enmity of the Jews; nor can all the wrath of man combined do anything beyond the fulfillment of that which God will cause to praise him, for the remainder of wrath he will restrain.—Psa. lxxvi. 10. Jesus said to those carnal Jews, "And ye would not." The substitution of the word "but" in the place of "and" is necessary to make it appear that by their unwillingness the kind design of the Lord was thwarted. This is in direct opposition to all the revelation given in the inspired Scriptures, and must be rejected by all who believe the truth.

The error of addressing the admonition to the sinner who has never obeyed the word of truth, to work out his own salvation, is clear from the plain language of the text (Phil. ii. 12, 13), where the words are written to those who already had "always obeyed the truth." It is as much in defiance of common sense as in opposition to revealed truth to address this language to such as have never known the truth, much less obeyed it.

The expression, "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," is presented by opposers of the truth as evidence that Jesus died for the sins of every one of the posterity of Adam. Very few are willing to admit, however, that everybody is saved by that propitiation. On the other hand, it is expressly declared of some by the inspiration of God that they "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."—Jude 7. Certainly Jesus Christ is not the propitiation for their sins. This truth forbids the application of this declaration of John to the natural world. The evident signification of the text is consistent with all other portions of the Scriptures, which is that in the declaration that "He is the propitiation for our sins," John includes with himself the whole company of them who are redeemed out of the natural family of Israel, to which he himself belonged; and in "the whole world" are included that "great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues," which constitute the ransomed of the Lord from among the Gentiles.—Rev. vii. 1-9. This accords with every portion of the inspired testimony concerning the salvation of sinners who

are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."—Rom. iii. 24; see also verses 29 and 30. Under the Mosaic dispensation all the Gentiles were regarded as excluded from the benefits of those revelations which were sent to Israel by the prophets; and it required a special revelation to prepare Peter to go to the Gentile Cornelius.—Acts x. In consideration of this deeply rooted sentiment of the Jewish believers, it is not strange that the apostle was moved by the Holy Ghost to specifically declare that this great antitypical propitiation for sins was not limited to the fleshly seed of Israel, but that it was equally efficacious for "all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." No efforts of men or angels can ever extend this promise to include one more than the exact number here specified; and the omnipotence of God assures all the benefits of this ample propitiation to every one who is included in this number.

In reference to natural things, it would be little short of insulting to suggest to one of ordinary common sense that the passage in Revelation xxii. 17 might be distorted from its plain significance. In this last chapter of the inspired record three times the Lord repeats the promise of his coming. In the sixteenth verse he had clearly announced his name and his glorious character. This was addressed to the bride, who is identified by the Spirit of Christ which leads her. Therefore both the Spirit and the bride respond to the promise of the coming of Jesus in one voice, saying, Come. So sacred is this communication between the church and her Lord that none can hear the heavenly sound but such as have the life and mind of Christ. Hence every one who hears is authorized and commanded to say, Come. Like the response in the twentieth verse, this expression joyfully acquiesces in the gracious promise of the coming of the heavenly Bridegroom. Then follows the precious word which authorizes him that is athirst to come. It is not a servile condition enjoined as the price of salvation, but it is the highest privilege that infinite love and grace can bestow upon a ransomed sinner. It is certain that every one who thirsts is blessed, for so our Lord declared in his first recorded sermon.—Matt. v. 6. It is indeed a miracle of grace that guilty sinners should hear such sweet words of welcome to this coming of our dear Redeemer to abide with his chosen and sanctified church. There is no parsimonious limitation to the provisions of this divine marriage feast. Whosoever will, is freely authorized to take of the water of life. Strangely inconsistent as it is with the literal reading of this word, those who claim all intelligence in religious matters, and who have the wisdom of this world, earnestly insist that this expression, "Whosoever will," includes those who have not this will. The

natural man, having only the carnal mind, is as destitute of the will as he is of the power to take of the water of life. As enmity cannot love, so the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. With the understanding that this whole revelation is that which God gave to Jesus Christ "to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass," it is not consistent to understand any expression included in this book as designed to influence any one who is not "his servant" to apply for a place as such. Even the literal reading of this text will not admit of such an interpretation.

Another expression which is often perverted in its application is a clause from the last address of Joshua to the tribes of Israel, detached from its connection, and applied as an appeal to sinners in general. It is usually quoted, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." This is cited as authorizing the doctrine that the Lord has submitted to every sinner the choice between serving him with the reward of heavenly bliss, and serving other powers with the consequence of eternal ruin. In this case, as in many others, it is only necessary to read the connection of the words quoted to detect their distortion from the plain meaning which appears even in the letter of the record. After summing up all the peculiar favors of God to them from the days of Terah to their entrance into the land of Canaan, Joshua exhorts them in the fourteenth verse to fear and serve the Lord. Then he adds, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—Joshua xxiv. 15. It will be seen that the service of the Lord was not included in this choice which was submitted to the tribes of Israel in this text. It was a choice between idols, from which Joshua for himself and his house stood entirely aloof, being devoted to the service of the Lord. It would seem that common honesty in reading the Scriptures should forbid such gross and reckless misapplication and distortion of the letter of the word; but while it has pleased the Lord to reveal these things to babes, the same God has hidden them from the wise and prudent; and he has assigned no other reason for doing this but that which was declared by our dear Redeemer in his thanksgiving prayer, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 26. As this reason was satisfactory to our Savior, in his humiliation and suffering, so it is sufficient for all who are led by his Spirit. Even the saints themselves, however, when led by their natural minds, are as far from being

reconciled to the will of God as are the most violent enemies of the gospel.

Many other portions of Scripture might be cited which are misconstrued and wrested to make them appear to controvert the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, without depending upon the works or will of man; but time and space would fail to notice every device of the adversary for bewildering the saints and robbing them of their rest in believing the truth. While these devices are sometimes so artfully contrived as to defy the little skill of the saints to controvert them, it is always safe for the tried child to remember the test by which we are directed to try the spirits whether they be of God. However plausible may be the doctrine presented for our acceptance, it cannot be the truth of God unless it includes in all its teaching the utter helplessness of the sinner, and the perfect work of salvation as completed by the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. These two points cannot be included in any doctrine which is in opposition to the truth as revealed in Jesus. The confession that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh necessarily involves the knowledge of the utterly lost condition of the sinners whom he came to save from their sins. If he failed to accomplish that work which he came into the world to do, then he does not answer to the declaration of the angel who assigned that name to him for the express reason that he should save his people from their sins. So that every conditional system of salvation is at once condemned by this inspired test as soon as it asserts that salvation depends upon anything other than the finished work of Jesus as applied by his Spirit to the individual case of each chosen vessel of mercy. The imposition of any restriction upon the sovereignty of that grace which bringeth salvation, is a denial that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; and whether we are able to withstand the sophistry of the opposers or not, we are safe in resting upon this inspired test. May all who love our Lord Jesus be kept by divine power and grace from the snares of the tempter, and ever find deliverance in the present help of the Lord our Righteousness.

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

AT the commencement of the current volume we published a special rate to our subscribers at which they might procure and forward *new* subscribers until April 1st, 1888. Many have responded, and sent us in the aggregate several hundred new names; but owing to the extremely severe weather throughout a large portion of the country, many have written us that they have not been able to get around among the brethren. We have therefore decided to extend the time, and will until further notice receive subscriptions for *new* subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to

the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

#### TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS

and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

#### FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS,

sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

These terms apply to none but those who are subscribers. Any one whose name is not on our list, and who wishes to take advantage of these rates, can send two dollars for his own subscription, and one dollar each for all other *new* subscribers. The inquiry may arise in the minds of some, Why is it that we can afford to send the paper to new subscribers cheaper than to old ones. To answer this question we will give a little statement, which may be new to many, how expenses are incurred and sustained by publishers of papers and their patrons, viz.:

In the first place, all the expense of preparing copy, setting the type, making ready for the press, &c., has to be incurred before the first paper is printed; and if we had but one subscriber, he would have to pay very high for his paper, or the publication could not be sustained. But suppose we got another subscriber. It would cost very little more than the price of the blank paper to run the second sheet through the press, after all was made ready for the first sheet. We could therefore supply the two subscribers at about half each what the one subscriber would have to pay, and so on; the more subscribers, the cheaper it could be supplied to each. Now, if at the present number of subscribers to the SIGNS we should lower the subscription price to one dollar a year, it would not pay expenses; nor would it at one dollar and fifty cents a year yield a sufficient profit to reasonably support the publishers. But should our circulation be doubled, we could not only supply the paper at one dollar and fifty cents a year, but could give our subscribers an eight-page weekly at that price.

Another query that may have occurred to some is, Why is it that I have to pay as much for the SIGNS as they charge for weekly newspapers? Local weekly newspapers do not depend on their subscriptions for half their support, but more on their advertising patronage. We have been offered thousands of dollars to insert advertisements in the SIGNS; but as our subscribers have supported us by their subscriptions, we devote the whole of the paper to reading matter, with the exception of a small portion of the last page,

on which we print a few advertisements for some of our own people, as much for the benefit of our readers as for the advertisers, but none of which are for a cash consideration.

We have now, dear brethren and friends, given a plain, simple statement, and ask our subscribers, one and all, to make a special effort to increase our list to that extent that we may be able to print our next volume an eight-page weekly at one dollar and fifty cents a year.

The SIGNS is now the cheapest paper of our order published in this country; and by the united effort of our patrons they can soon enable us to furnish it at about half its present price. Our experience for the last three months has convinced us that if all our subscribers will interest themselves in this matter, and if each one who reads this will make an effort to get at least one new subscriber, we shall commence our next volume with a list of subscribers twice as large as we did the present volume, and as an eight-page weekly at one dollar and fifty cents a year.

CHURCH HISTORY.

WE were much gratified to find in the *Gospel Messenger* for April, 1888, an article from which we make the following extract:

SHOULD WE NOT DO IT?

Dear Readers:—Our faithful and beloved brother, Elder Sylvester Hassell, gave the Primitive Baptists near ten years of his time in writing the Church History; and more than that, he involved himself, to say nothing of his arduous labors, in a debt of two thousand dollars, upon which he pays an interest of eight per cent. This labor and expense were all to give us and our children the benefits of his great and valuable Church History. He has to teach school for his support. Now, beloved brethren and sisters, what I want to say is this: Should we not, as many of us as feel to do so, come to brother Hassell's rescue, and see that he does not suffer loss in his labor for us and our children? I for one am not willing that he should suffer loss in serving me, and therefore I make this proposition to the readers and friends of the *Messenger* and of the brotherhood everywhere: That I will be one of two thousand to give him, gratis, one dollar; or one of one thousand to give him two dollars. I feel almost confident that there are two thousand readers of the *Messenger* who could and would cheerfully make this small donation to brother Hassell; and one thousand who would cheerfully give him two dollars.

Please, friends, do not let this matter pass out of your minds. In conclusion, I will say that Elder Hassell made no suggestion of this to me, but it is on my sole responsibility that I make it.

As indicated on the 813th and 814th pages of the Church History, the Kehukee Association desired to furnish the book to subscribers at the

mere cost of publication, and to have the expenses of the author paid by voluntary contributions, the last column on each subscription book being intended to contain the amounts of such contributions. Less than one-twentieth of even the junior author's expenses has been paid in this way, and he has received nothing from the sale of the book.

When it was expected that the work would contain only six hundred pages in long primer type, the Association thought that the price should be two dollars (see page 814); and though the book contains one thousand and thirty-four pages in brier and nonpareil type—about three times as much matter as originally anticipated—the price has been but two dollars for the cloth binding; the additional charge for the better bindings goes to the binder. It would be hard to find anywhere a cheaper book.

J. R. RESPESS.

We fully indorse the above; and having printed the Church History, have a personal knowledge of the heavy expense which brother Hassell has sustained in the publication of the book. The work contains about three times the amount stated in the prospectus, and is sold at about half the price usually charged for books containing the same amount of reading matter. How the authors accomplished the enormous labor of compiling it in the time they did, is certainly wonderful. Let any of the readers of the History turn to the Index, and consider how long it would take them to do that work alone. In addition to this immense labor, shall we allow brother Hassell to incur a debt of over two thousand dollars? He has spared neither labor nor expense in the faithful discharge of the duty assigned him and his late beloved father by the Kehukee Association, but has given us a history that we and our children may well be proud of. Although we cannot fully agree with the author in some of the views he has given, yet the christian spirit so plainly manifested in these writings, and the willingness and fairness with which he accorded us space to present our views in the book, are all we can ask of any history; and as a whole we both indorse and recommend it as a HISTORY.

Now, brethren, we would suggest that we, as many of us as can, send Elder Sylvester Hassell, at Williams-ton, Martin Co., N. C., such amounts as we feel able to, and see if we can not raise this debt, which he has incurred for our benefit.

In conclusion we will say that there has never been any suggestion or intimation from Elder Hassell in regard to this matter; nor are we in any way personally benefited, as the payment of balance due us is by contract to be paid by the sale of the book.

Since writing the above we have read a letter just received from

brother Durand on the same subject, which will appear in our next number.

CAUSE OF DELAY.

OUR issue for March 15th, 1888, was one week late, which was occasioned by our having our press repaired. We sent for a man from the factory in New York, and he came, and took a large portion of the press back to the factory, which, after repairing, was returned; but the morning that he was to come to finish his work the railroads were all blockaded by the snow, and trains did not run for several days, so that he was detained for a week. We tried to have our paper printed at another office, but it did not work satisfactorily. We expect to have this issue about on time, and ask our subscribers to pardon the delay of the last number, as it was unavoidable.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

Our dear old brother, Elder Joseph Furr, passed from time to eternity on Monday night, Feb. 13, 1888. What a blessing God has blessed us with! What a gift he has given us! Eternal life! Elder Furr is no more the pastor; he is no more the beloved brother and christian man; he is no more the loving and faithful husband, the true, sincere friend. All these he was in a degree perhaps never surpassed; but none of these is he to us now. All the good qualities of heart and mind which he so eminently possessed, and which endeared him to us above all others, are dead to us now. He is, to all that he was pastor, brother, husband and friend, dead; but we hope, we believe, that to Christ he is alive forevermore. Though every vestige of the earthly image has passed away forever, yet when we shall see him again he shall be to us what Christ is; for Christ is glorified in him. He is crowned with righteousness. How much more his fullness! Then will we say what the flesh now forbids, Glory to God in the highest for the loss, seeing there is such gain.

Elder Furr was born August 15, 1808, near Paris, Loudoun Co., Va., and baptized in 1833 by Elder Henry Southern, in Hardy County, W. Va. He was one of ten which were in the constitution of Mt. Zion Church, Hampshire County, W. Va. He married Lorena Hogan in 1837, with whom he lived seventeen months, when she died. He commenced preaching in 1837, in Hampshire County, W. Va. In 1848 he took charge of four churches in the Juniata Association, Pennsylvania, whom he served with a devotion known only by those whom he served. To the day of his death their interest in the dear old man testified how dearly they loved him. In 1854 he married Mary A. Dowdell, of Loudoun County, Va., and the same year took charge of New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va., and Bethel Church, Montgomery Co., Md. He continued pastor of the New Valley Church until the day of his death. A true biography, nor one that would do even comparative justice to this great man of God, could not be written in the space allowed an obituary notice. His patience under trials, his steadfastness under adversity, his endurance under hardship, his constant, unwavering devotion and fidelity to the cause of Christ, if written, would prove one of the brightest pages in modern church history. His was a history to be known of all men, a living testimony, not gathered from the dusty records of the past, but the living works of faith which God wrought in him, and which every child of God could read, be his learning great or little.

A hymn was sung at the home of Elder Furr, and prayer made, according to his request. He was then carried to the New Valley meeting-house, where his funeral was preached, from 2 Tim. iv. 6-8; participated in by Elders A. B. Francis and E. V. White.

Your brother, I hope,

E. V. WHITE.

LEESBURG, Va.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—We come again and again to ask a place in that portion of your paper devoted to mortality.

DIED—At her residence in Lancaster County, Pa., Mrs. Malissa Gregg, in the fifty-eighth year of her age. The deceased was the wife of brother Solomon Gregg, who survives her; also one daughter and four sons. It is, no doubt, the greatest loss they have ever been called to bear. Sister Gregg was of an amiable disposition, patient in well doing, regular in her attendance on all the appointments of the church at Rock Springs, where her membership was, cheerful, warm and hearty in her expressions of love and fellowship toward those she loved in the Lord, and stood firm in the doctrine of God her Savior. This dispensation, as all such, none can control; but the present falls heavily upon the bereaved husband and daughter. She also has been called to follow in the footsteps of the flock, in the faith in which the devoted mother lived and died. All relations which pertain to this life must be broken up or be dissolved; but the heavenly, indissoluble and eternal relation and union to the great Head of the church is forever. Here there is no continuing city. Our sister was baptized by the writer in 1869. It is to me a great satisfaction to see those to whom it has been my privilege to administer the ordinance of baptism walking orderly and consistently as members of that kingdom which is not of this world. We feel the loss sensibly in our little company at Rock Springs, but it is ours to submit to the decree of the All-wise, whose ways are always best, although to us often clouds and darkness are around about him, and thick darkness of the skies. All these things tend to break loose the ties that bind us to earth, that our affections may be set on things above. The afflicted family have the good feelings of a large circle of friends and acquaintances, and the confidence and fellowship of their brethren. The Lord be near them, and their strong hold in time of trouble.

The funeral took place on the 18th and the interment was at Rock Springs, with some remarks on the occasion by the writer, to a large and attentive congregation of people.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Md.

By request of sister A. D. Wallace, of Covington, Ky., I send for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of sister Sarah Stephens, who died in the eighty-fifth year of her age, at the home of her nieces, the Misses Louis, in Lexington, Ky., Aug. 30, 1887. Her parents were John and Martha Stephens, and were old Virginians. Both were Old School Baptists, who believed in the doctrine of the total depravity of man, and that salvation is by grace alone. They were members of the Forks of Elkhorn Church, Franklin Co., Ky. Elder William Hickman was the first Baptist preacher that ever preached in Kentucky, and was pastor of that church from the time of its organization until his death. In September, 1823, sister Stephens joined the same church by experience and baptism, where she remained a consistent, orderly member, in the fellowship, love and enjoyment of the church. After many years she received a letter of dismissal and united with the Sardis Church, in Boone Co., Ky., where she lived, as I often heard

my dear mother say (though now, as I believe, one of the blessed in heaven), an ornament to her profession, in the uninterrupted fellowship and affection of the brethren at Sardis. On the second Saturday in February, 1875, she was dismissed by letter, and united with the Bryans Church, of Fayette Co., Ky., where she remained until summoned to sleep that sleep from which none of the saints of God ever wake to weep. The subject of this notice was never married, and was one of a family of ten children. Whenever sickness, distress or death visited the families of her nine married brothers and sisters, she was quick to lend a helping hand. Even in her old age she took the charge of orphan children, sacrificing her own pleasure for their comfort. She lived to see the last but one of this large family go from the trials of earth. As it pleased our heavenly Father to call this estimable lady, friend and sister to rest in the dust, may our precious sister Wallace rest trustfully, calmly and sweetly in the promise that our dear Redeemer has left on record, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

SALLIE J. CORBIN.

MARCH 18, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Will you please publish in the SIGNS the death of our youngest daughter? After a protracted illness of between five and six years, she died on February 5, 1888, at the age of eight years and eight months. Even in all her sufferings, which were at times intense, and which she bore with remarkable patience and with sweetness of temper, she was the light and life of the household. While she uttered no outward expressions of a knowledge of eternal life, I have always felt a strong assurance that she was and is numbered among those for whom the dear Savior's precious blood was shed; and I think we felt it in our hearts to say, Thy will, O Lord, not ours, be done. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Yours in a precious hope,

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., March 5, 1888.

## APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows:

- At Mt. Sterling, Ky., Tuesday p. m., April 24.
- At Mt. Carmel, Ky., Wednesday a. m., April 25.
- At Mt. Gilead, Ky., Thursday a. m., 26.
- At Mays Lick, Ky., Friday a. m., 27.
- At Little Flock, Ky., Sunday a. m., 29.
- At Georgetown, Ky., Tuesday a. m., May 1.
- At Elk Lick, Ky., Wednesday a. m., May 2.
- At Sardis, Ky., Friday a. m., May 4.
- At Mill Creek, Ohio (near Cincinnati), Saturday and Sunday a. m., May 5, 6.
- At New Castle, Ind. (as brother Coble may arrange), Monday night, May 7.
- At Lebanon Ind. (near Elder J. A. Johnson's) Tuesday a. m., May 8.
- At Greenfield, Ind. (and vicinity, as brethren may arrange), Wednesday and Thursday, May 9, 10.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa.

## RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

Isaac Jones 2 50, Warren Worcester 2 50, M H Hassell 2 50, Jesse Adams 2, Jas S Massy 2, W D Hardison 2, H P Cravin 2, W L Conner 2, Henry Haynie 2 50, Peter Jones Jr 2 50.—Total \$22 50.

## ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (16th), 1888, and continue the two following days.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will hold her next annual session, if the Lord will, with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (23d), 1888, and continue until Friday evening following.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 30th), 1888, and continue three days.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (6th), 1888, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association, will be held, if the Lord will, with the Charleston & Sullivan Church, in Tioga County, Pa., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (13th), 1888, and continue in session the two following days.

## THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting of the Old School or Primitive Baptists held with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, Pa., to commence on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1888. A general invitation is given to any of our faith and order who may feel in their hearts to visit us, as we are destitute of ministers. Elder E. V. White, of Virginia, is serving us as pastor.

Those visiting us by railway will have to come on the Baltimore & Ohio Rail Road to Hancock, Md., on Thursday, where they will be met and conveyed to the place of the meeting, a distance of about twenty miles.

Those wishing to come will please write and give timely notice to Ahimaz Mellett, or Dennis Mellett, or Jacob F. Garland. The post office address of all the above brethren is Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

## LIFE'S JOURNEY AND LESSONS BY THE WAY.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1888.

NO. 8.

## POETRY.

### PSALM XLVI. 10.

"Be still, and know that I am God."

Be still, dear child, nor dare complain  
Beneath thy Father's chastening rod;  
He says, "I will thy strength sustain:  
Be still, and know that I am God."

Be still when through the furnace led;  
The flame shall prove to be thy good;  
The guide that leads thee, child, hath said,  
"Be still, and know that I am God."

"I only will thy dress remove,  
And thou shalt soon be sent abroad;  
I deal with thee alone in love:  
Be still, and know that I am God."

Though Sinai's thunders may resound,  
The trumpet's voice may sound aloud;  
Yet in the Lord is safety found:  
"Be still, and know that I am God."

Though winds may blow, and clouds may rise,  
And dark and dreary be thy road;  
Thy Father rules both earth and skies:  
"Be still, and know that I am God."

He that in heaven, and earth, and seas,  
Rules all creation with a nod,  
Says, "Trust in me, and be at ease:  
Be still, and know that I am God."

Thy doubts and fears, thy joy and grief,  
He measures out to thee for good,  
And will in due time give relief:  
Be still, and know that he is God.

His way, dear child, is in the sea,  
His footsteps in the mighty flood;  
In sovereign love he says to thee,  
"Be still, and know that I am God."

I. N. VANMETER.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 12, 1888.

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—Whenever we think of your visits here it is with pleasure, and especially so the first one, as it was such a satisfaction for us to hear you tell of some of the way the Lord had led you. Truly he has encircled you with his love, shielding you from many dangers, preserving your life in fearful storms, and bringing you through many and sore trials. It certainly was a comfort to hear of the Lord's presence and rich manifestations in your prison life, and that you had proved the truth of the words,

"Prisons would palaces prove  
If Jesus but dwelt with me there."

When Paul and Silas were bound in prison it was by a golden chain, and they sang for joy while their feet were fast in the stocks. No prisons of men can shut out the comforting presence of the blessed Savior; for he is often nearest in the most trying hours, causing his suffering ones to rejoice in tribulation. The three Hebrew children were in the hottest furnace, when the form of the fourth

was seen with them. I have often thought it must have been a most wonderful exaltation of soul that Peter enjoyed as he walked away from the prison, after the angel had loosed the chain and swung open the bolted doors; and how full of praise must his heart have been when, as he came to the house of Mary, he found many assembled praying for his deliverance. And, my brother, while you were in captivity I have no doubt that many dear ones at home were offering petitions to the Father of mercies for you. Like your dear and honored father, you came into the church in childhood, preferring Jerusalem above your chief joy, and entering her courts with praise. Like him you have been chosen to stand on her walls, proclaiming the truth both with your voice and with your pen; and I trust that the same love from the church collectively which followed him through his long pilgrimage will ever be with you for your encouragement by the way. May the great Shepherd continue to give you wisdom, that you will ever be enabled to rightly divide the word of truth, giving to each a portion, seasoned with charity; and may you in meekness instruct them that oppose themselves, though in your labor you must suffer reproach, because you "trust in the living God." But is it not a blessed thing to suffer for the name of Christ, if it may be that we shall also reign with him? We feel much sympathy for you in the affliction of your daughter in Canada, and also for her. It seems doubly sad for one so young and full of aspiring hopes to be prostrated by illness, and we hope it may be the Lord's will to restore her to health. We know that he has the same power as when on earth he healed all manner of diseases, and turned water into wine. Now, with your permission, I will write some for our spiritual family circle.

Dear kindred of like precious faith:—Since my earliest remembrance the SIGNS OF THE TIMES has been a messenger in our home, and in youth I learned to welcome its bright face with gladness. It contained for me cheering words from kindred souls, and instruction from teachers in Israel. I truly loved those who talked of Jesus and his wonderful love and power; and my heart was elevated with heavenly joy to read of those who died in the triumphs of a living faith. Each number was read with eagerness, and finished too soon; so I resorted to the old volumes, both of the SIGNS and the *Advocate and*

*Monitor*, and some old numbers of the *Gospel Standard*. Such testimonies, with the precious Bible and hymn book, were all I cared to read. How new and charming it all was to my hungry soul. It seemed that I had found a mine of wealth. No words can tell how I enjoyed these new treasures; and I could never begin to express what riches were shown to me in the truth during the first months after I received an assurance that my unworthy name was written among those to whom it is said, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." I felt that I had just begun to live. Old things had passed away, and, behold, all things had become new. My heart was overflowing with love to him who died that sinners might live, who suffered that we might rejoice, who was abased that we might be exalted, and by whose stripes we are healed. "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste."

"On the wings of his love  
I was carried above  
All sin and temptation and pain;  
And I could not believe  
That I ever should grieve,  
That I ever should suffer again."

Years have passed, with many changes, since those golden days, and I have made many crooked paths, walking much by night, when neither sun, moon nor stars appeared. I traveled a weary way, with Jeremiah for a companion, being hedged about, and "my way inclosed with hewn stone." I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, but I found him not. I watched for his footsteps more than they that watch for the morning; and though I knew it not, he was even at the door, showing himself through the lattice. Again, he filled my heart with praise, and I magnified his name, that he had remembered me in my low estate. Time glided on, the Lord raining trials and showers of blessings upon our beloved home. Our oldest brother was cut down in a distant land, leaving a family greatly bereaved and afflicted; and the sad message came to us like an arrow, bowing our dear parents with the piercing stroke, and filling our home with grief. In his own time the great Physician healed the wound, pouring in the oil and the wine; but the scar remained. In the midst of sickness and sorrow he filled our hearts with rejoicing, as he brought one after another of our brothers and sisters into the enjoyment of a hope in Jesus. How pleas-

ant now to sit by the bedside and read what was spiritual food to them. We found such lovely hymns, that we had not noticed before. Heaven was very near while we talked of its joys. Three brothers, though in different localities, were exercised about the same time, and found peace in believing, all entering the visible church within less than three months, the sick being raised up to praise the Lord in his sanctuary. Soon afterward our sisters came with trembling to tell in Zion what the Lord had done for their souls, and were received with gladness. How we loved the covenant meetings at that time. It was so good to hear each one speak in the solemn assemblies, telling of the Lord's mercies, which were new every morning and fresh every evening. Then what a happy household was ours. Our dear father and mother rejoiced to see their children walk in the truth. Our horn was exalted, and our souls filled with singing. "There is none holy as the Lord;" "neither is there any rock like our God." Well do I remember one evening, out of many like it, when our family was assembled for worship. While our dear and revered father was reading from the Bible I looked around at our home circle, and fully realized that many of our dear ones were "gathered into the fold, with believers enrolled," and that one was chosen to labor in the Lord's vineyard, to be a cup-bearer to the heirs of salvation, breaking the bread of life to the little ones; then as I listened to my father's voice, in sublime adoration and praise to the Holy One of Israel, my heart overflowed with glad thanksgiving. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." Then a trembling passed over me as the thought came, "This cannot last; it must be broken." But our united family was still permitted to have some precious seasons and delightful meetings in listening to the unsearchable riches of Christ from one of our number who had just entered his kingdom. It was not long, however, before a cloud was seen in the horizon, which rolled up in thick darkness, wringing the cry from our hearts, "Lord, give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man." Helpless indeed do we feel when we see our dear ones suffering and sinking, without the power to relieve. "He weakened our strength in the way," but with his own kind hand he upheld us. During the many weeks and months of anxious watching we

often had tokens of love from him who takes care of the sparrows, and sometimes gives songs in the night. I remember one evening of peculiar anxiety and care, when my heart reached out for more strength, and the words came echoing into my soul, "The Lord is my strength and my song, and he will be my portion forever." All my weariness was gone in a moment, and I felt that I could do and bear anything that was my Father's will. At another time, as I was closing my eyes to rest, in great sadness of heart, these words came ringing into my mind, bringing peace, "There shall be no night there." All the next day, though my hands were busy, these words with their many branchings were reverberating all through the chambers of my soul, and there appeared to be a heavenly mist in the balmy air. Then could I say, with David, "Because the Lord hath inclined his ear unto me, I will call upon him as long as I live." Soon a break was made in our circle; but in removing one from the earthly to the heavenly home the Lord unveiled his face most wonderfully in our presence. He drove back the waves of Jordan, and gave us a view of his indescribable glory. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Another and another was gathered away; but every one taken was in great love and mercy, each one seeing "the King in his beauty, and beholding the land that is very far off." Yet this sundering of tender home ties was indeed crushing; and after the strokes were so often repeated, leaving so many vacant places that our home was almost empty, then my sinful heart rebelled, feeling it was too much. I could not bear it. "All these things are against me." I was unreconciled, and murmured at the dealings of the Lord's hand. Then he withdrew his presence, and the earth was dark, desolate and lonely. I truly mourned that I had not been able to say, "Thy will be done." How could I have been so unmindful of his goodness? As my heart painfully reproached me, I was led to see what sorrows our dear ones had escaped, and what joys they had found, and my heart cried in bitterness, "Restore unto me, O Lord, the joys of thy salvation." Though my chastisement was severe, it was for my good. When the storm had passed there was a heavenly calm. Afterward, in the solemn stillness of night, as I recalled the scenes of the past, the inquiry arose in the depths of my soul, Why all these troubles, these raging billows, these overwhelming waves? Why must we drink so deeply of the waters of Marah? Unexpectedly the answer was softly whispered into my soul, reproving and quieting my questionings, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

It is with much hesitancy that I present these few glimpses by the way of the loving faithfulness, kind

forbearance and tender mercies of a covenant-keeping God, hoping there may be a word of encouragement to some trembling soul who has forgotten that "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Surely "it is because his compassions fail not that we are not consumed." I have thus far found this promise fulfilled, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." With all the changes of time the truth is the same. It cannot change, for its foundation is in the holy mountains; and they who have experienced its power are bound together by a hidden tie, which is a bond of love. Many of the dear pens that were so cheering in past years are laid aside; but their impress still remains, and has lost none of its savor. Some, however, whose epistles of love were hailed with gladness by me in my early experience, still remain as pillars in the Lord's house on the earth, though for them the shadows are lengthening as they approach the sunset. But the sky is golden, for "at evening time it shall be light;" and there is a solemn sweetness in the tread of home-going feet toward the Father's house. Though so many of our beloved ones, whom we held closely in our affections, have entered into rest, causing us to feel that the earth could no more blossom, and the wheels of time move on, yet he who caused the dry bones to hear the word of the Lord and live has raised up others to tell the same blessed truth, for he will not leave himself without witnesses; and it is by the same power that the servants of the living God can comfort mourning souls, either in preaching or by writing. The Spirit and power of Christ are the same everywhere and through all time, often enabling the Lord's servants to unveil mysteries; but it never causes them to be void of charity for those who have not been so blessed in understanding. When this spirit prevails every member will be in the right place, that there be no schisms in the body.

As I write my thoughts reach out in many directions, to all who love the name of Jesus. How varied are the circumstances and places of abode of those who will read these lines. Some, by reason of age and infirmity, can seldom meet in the assemblies of the saints. Some are on beds of languishing, suffering pain and sorrow of heart, having had all earthly hopes crushed, and the brightest visions of youth fade away. What a blessing for such if windows of grace are opened, lifting them above their sorrows and the changing scenes of earth. Others, though in health, and surrounded by all the comforts of this life, are in bitterness of soul, mourning their inward poverty, and feeling that they are outcasts among

the children of men. They have been trying to keep the holy law, and failing, have found to their amazement and grief that "whosoever offends in one point is guilty of all." Their transgressions are before them as dark mountains; and not one pure thought, word or deed in their whole lives can they see. The overwhelming waves are approaching, and they sink in deep waters, where there is no standing, while in the depths of their souls they are crying, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." O would they not exchange conditions with the poorest beggar who has a hope in Jesus, or with the meanest worm that crawls, being without a never-dying soul. The most beautiful things of earth are but as mockery to these suffering ones, who eat no pleasant bread, and are wondering what the end will be. A "Who can tell?" springs up in the heart, as the messenger of truth is laid hold of, to see if possibly there may be some word that will bring relief; and, behold, one of the Lord's faithful ministers is here by his Spirit preaching salvation to the chief of sinners. How wonderful! What precious words! Can it be that such a token has come, bringing light and warmth, "the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness?" Glad tidings it is indeed! The poor, heavy laden soul has found rest, but cannot understand why, only because it seemed good in the sight of him who said, "Not many mighty, not many noble, are called;" but these things are kept from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. This will ever remain a sweet mystery; for "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This message was prepared away in the mountains, or across the sea, being indited through the Spirit by one who has himself been in this desert land, this waste, howling wilderness. Having tasted the wormwood and the gall, and by rich and reigning grace been brought into the liberty of the sons of God, he is prepared to bear messages of comfort to sorrow-stricken souls. Then comes the inquiry, How could a stranger in some distant land tell all my hard questions and read my heart? It is the Holy Spirit taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto us. Such were some of my thoughts while reading "Winter afore Harvest," by J. C. Philpot, many years ago. I did not then think that he could be living on the earth; but afterward I read many comforting words from his sweetly gifted pen.

Although there is such a variety in the experiences of the Lord's people, and as great a variety in the gifts to express what we have seen and heard and handled of the word of life, yet it is all by the same Spirit. Some have bright manifestations of the love of God, and the power to

portray their thoughts in living colors; while others feel that they have but a glimmering light, and hesitate, with trembling, to speak of it. Yet if it is a good hope through grace, founded on the rock, the stone which the builders rejected, but which has become the head of the corner, then it is the same hope, and equally valuable, each being comforting to the other. But how many rich experiences are unwritten, how many sorrows untold; for hands are weary with care, and hearts wrung with grief, while mourners refuse to be comforted. There are also joys that are only written in the heart, too sacred for mortal ears, "unspeakable and full of glory." But there is One who can read it all, however deeply it may be hidden from mortal sight. He knoweth the heart and trieth the reins; and no secret sigh or bitter tear, no deed of love or emotion of praise, is lost to our Father in heaven. These things are graven on his heart, who was tempted in all points as we are, who knoweth our frame, and remembers that we are dust, and who has said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." The glorious theme of redeeming love is always new, with its many rich unfoldings, which are more clearly seen as we are permitted to enter the inner courts, and are blessed with the unspeakable favor to commune with the Lord in the holy of holies.

We have been reading the two volumes of sisters Kate Swartout and Mary Parker, whose names are familiar, having often enriched the columns of the SIGNS; and we have found it very interesting to read of how they have been brought from the wilderness and the solitary way to a city of habitation, and how they have been led about and instructed. Both being ill in health, our sympathies are deeply arrested. Tried in the fire, they have come forth as gold. While suffering in body, they have by faith beheld the gates of the eternal city. Surely pens must have been guided by infinite love to tell so clearly of its power and sweetness. It is some years since the experience of sister Swartout appeared in the SIGNS, and in reading it I felt acquainted with her, though we had never met. It then seemed that a new link was added to the golden chain of love that encircled my being. I watched the progress of her experience in her published letters, and rejoiced with her when she was enabled to walk in the footsteps of the flock, entering by the door into the sheepfold, where she could feed in green pastures and rest beside still waters. I have since read her writings with much interest, feeling assured that when the Lord makes up his jewels she will be counted among them. Her book, "Life's Journey and Lessons by the Way," is affectionately dedicated to her sisters in Christ; and I think it will be a com-

fort and benefit to all who may peruse its pleasant pages. In reading the "Collection of Gems," from the pen of our deeply afflicted sister, Mary Parker, it really seems a marvel that one so prostrated by disease and suffering could write so beautifully and in such exalted strains concerning the kingdom of our God; and we have reason to know that not all of her excellent letters are contained in this small volume. Well do I remember the first one I received from her. It was a most lovely evening at our home, and I was sitting by my mother's window, overlooking the orchard, with my eyes resting on the crimson and yellow clouds in the western sky, when this dear letter came to me; and as I read it I felt that a blessed perfume from the heavenly garden was wafted into my soul. I knew that though this dear sister was struggling amid the waves, her feet were on the Rock, and underneath were the everlasting arms. The Lord's ways are equal; for while he presses down with one hand, he raises up with the other, and guides us with his eye. My heart filled with emotion when I read her letter to sister S. N. Biggs, of North Carolina, who has since departed this life, having an abundant entrance into the kingdom above. In this letter, by the request of sister Biggs, she gives a short sketch of her life, which is very touching. She speaks of the Lord's shining presence in her sick room, making it sometimes a halloved spot, a holy place. The dear suffering sister to whom it was addressed has reached the portals of glory, but the radiance of her beautiful and devoted life will long remain wherever she was known, and is a comfort to those who loved her, and especially to her precious mother in her deep sorrow and bereavement. But she who penned them is still in a body of pain, longing for home, yet with patience waiting her appointed time, when faith shall be swallowed up in sight. Then will she be clothed in white raiment among that innumerable company who have come out of great tribulation, satisfied, having awakened in the likeness of her Redeemer. O what a blessed change, when the suffering children of earth shall bid adieu to sin and sorrow, pain and perplexity, entering the peaceful haven of rest, where summer's heat and winter's cold cannot come, and where the beating storm and fearful tempest can no more reach. Then will be realized that all our afflictions here "are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." On that delightful shore there will be no more war or contention, no more bitterness or misunderstanding, among those who are united by a holy love. They who enter that transcendent abode will hunger no more, for the bread of heaven is there; they will thirst no more, for the pure water of life is ever springing from the crystal fountain. There will be no more pain, sorrow or weeping, for all tears will

be wiped away; and they need no candle, for there is no night there; neither light of the sun, for the glory of the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne is the light thereof. No discordant feelings will ever mar the harmony of that blissful home, where perfect felicity reigns, and melodious anthems of praise will ever resound through the heavenly mansions to our exalted King. There will we possess all we longed for here;

"And every power find sweet employ  
In that eternal world of joy."

The happy spirits robed in light, wearing crowns of victory, worship before the throne, giving praise, glory and honor to him who sitteth thereon, and to the Lamb forever and ever.

In hope, your unworthy sister,  
BESSIE DURAND.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Feb. 19, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I had thought that I would not write anything more for publication, feeling that perhaps my communications tended more to confusion than to edification and comfort; but I received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES yesterday for February 15th, which was so comforting and full of interest to me that I cannot refrain from expressing my gratitude to God for such a blessed medium, through which the tried and scattered saints may communicate to each other their trials, sorrows and joys. I have recently passed through some of the most severe trials and afflictions. My God, whom I sometimes hope my soul loveth, has seemed to be a long way off. I have for the past three months been reading in the Old Testament, having read from Genesis to nearly through Ezekiel, and scarcely anything but condemnation has met me at every sentence. My heart, it seems, has become as hard as a stone, scarcely ever being able to shed a tear, or even feel any spiritual emotion; and I have been anxious to get into the New Testament, to see if I could not find something there to soothe and comfort my weary soul. I have had many doubts and fears, and there is only one thing that has given me comfort, and that is my troubles. I have thought that perhaps if I had not previously tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, I should not be so troubled over my condition. I am greatly troubled about my condition, and this is some consolation to me; for it is written that the wicked "are not troubled like other men." But I am troubled—greatly troubled. Again, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous;" and I am afflicted. These things have been some comfort to me in my darkness. Last night, when I commenced reading the SIGNS, it seemed that everything I read touched me. I cannot express the joy that seemed to well up in my soul while I read, and it seemed to pervade my whole being. In this number of the SIGNS we have, first, an article from dear brother H.

Cox, upon the subject of the wrath of God as poured out upon the rebellious house of Israel and all other wicked nations. These are things which I have had much thought upon recently. It is evident that God punishes wickedness wherever found, whether in his own peculiar people or in those who know not God. "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." The Scriptures are full of testimony to the effect that God has in all ages of the world punished the wicked for their wickedness, whether nations or individuals; but it is even so that God never forsakes his chosen people. When he chastises his people for their disobedience it is for their good; and when they are thus tried they "shall come forth as gold." "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard," &c. Next in order is Elder Durand's excellent article on Romans xiii. 8, on the subject of the debt of love that the saints owe to their dear Redeemer and to one another. As I read this I was filled almost to overflowing, to think of the great debt that I, a poor, hell-deserving sinner, owed to the holy law of God, without a single farthing to liquidate such a just claim; and then to think that while in this utterly helpless and deplorable condition the great and only Mediator between God and men stepped in and paid the whole debt; and then, in his own good time, and by his holy Spirit, he communicated to me that he had settled all claims that the law held against me, and that he had blotted out as a thick cloud all my transgressions, and freely justified me by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; and that now all he requires of me is obedience to his holy commandments. These meditations are sweet to my soul. While reading and meditating over these things I was made to realize what an ungrateful wretch I am, and how cold is my love to that God who has done so much for me, and how cold I fear that my love is toward the brethren. Yet this is one of the strongest evidences that we have passed from death unto life, "because we love the brethren." And, "He that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." O! I would to God that love for God and for one another might be increased among the saints.

Next come the experiences of Cora L. Jackson, Wm. J. Blake and G. C. Jordan, all of which are good and comforting. As I read these experiences, and the combined testimony of each, ascribing all the power, glory and honor to the King of kings and Lord of lords, and their sweet deliverance from the bondage of sin and guilt, I could scarcely refrain from weeping; and I felt that I could embrace each one in the arms of love. How soul-refreshing to the poor and afflicted people of God are such evidences of the power of the

grace of God that bringeth salvation. While I pen these lines my poor soul is lifted, and filled with love, and I feel a great desire to be in the assembly of the saints. Next comes Fred. W. Keene's letter, speaking of his afflictions and bereavements; yet, amid these deep afflictions and bereavements, ascribing greatness, honor and glory to our God, and expressing resignation and reconciliation to his divine will. To me it seems the greatest blessing that can possibly be bestowed upon poor, finite mortals, to be enabled to trust our all in the hands of an omnipotent God, and to feel that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," and to thus quietly and patiently submit to whatever our God sees fit to send upon us. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" and we are "more than conquerors through him that loved us, and gave himself for us." To him alone be all the praise.

Next comes Elder Hancks' good and comforting article on Nahum i. 7. My dear brother Hancks, how awful and intolerable would be our condition in trouble were it not for the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God to his poor and afflicted people. Is he a God afar off, and not a God at hand? He has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Were it not for the timely appearance and help of the Lord, I think I should sometimes sink in despair. But he always comes with helping hand in the last extremity, and catches us before we fall, and upholds us by his omnipotent power; and he generally comes to us in a way and at a time least expected. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, I the Lord will hear them." The saints are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." "Not one of them shall e'er be lost. His blood has bought them—dear they cost."

Dear brother Hancks, I have thought of you and sister Hancks many times since we were together in Georgia last summer. How glad I would be to be with you this morning, and hear you proclaim Jesus as the way, the truth and the life to poor, perishing sinners. I do hope, if it is the Lord's will, that we may yet meet again on earth. If not, I trust we shall meet in heaven, to part no more forever. I am shedding tears while writing these lines.

I find in this number of the SIGNS good letters from J. Beeman, B. F. Coulter, A. B. Francis, John Seitz, J. G. W., Mrs. J. K. Boyd, S. C. Johnson, J. W. French, P. West and A. B. Brees; all of which are good and comforting, and not a single one of them but gives all the glory, praise and honor to the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God out of every nation, kindred, tongue

and people. As to Elder S. C. Johnson, I have long known him, and have heard him testify the gospel of the grace of God, to the comfort of the Lord's people; and I still have him in tender memory, and revere his white locks. May God bless him, and enable him to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The editorial in this issue, on the subject of "The Two Witnesses," is of peculiar interest to me. I have had much thought upon this subject. It seems very plain to me that the two witnesses are the law and gospel dispensations, or the church under the law and the church in the gospel dispensation. These two anointed ones have always stood by the Lord of the whole earth, bearing testimony to the divine sovereignty and omnipotence of Jehovah. It is true that God said of his chosen people Israel, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." Jesus said to his disciples, "And ye are witnesses of these things." And Paul says the "Holy Ghost is also a witness." But these all testified in the church and for the church. These two witnesses have always been faithful and true witnesses. The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and every man presseth into it. "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." As to the time that the dead bodies of these two witnesses were to "lie in the street of the great city," I am not able to tell. I notice that Revelation xi. 4 reads, "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." This plainly shows that the two candlesticks represent the church in the two dispensations; for in Revelation i. 20 we read, "And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." From the reading of the eleventh chapter of Revelation it occurs to me that all that is said in reference to the prophecy of these two witnesses has not yet been fulfilled. Perhaps a portion of them were fulfilled about the time that the Savior made his advent into the world; but as the gospel church has not yet finished her testimony, I cannot believe that all things concerning her have been fulfilled. There is a time spoken of in Revelation when the "mystery of God shall be finished," and not until then do I think that the testimony of the two witnesses will be finished; for the seventh verse reads, "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." Notice that the testimony of these two witnesses is to be finished before they are killed. Like Elder Beebe, I do not think that the terms "killed," "dead bodies," &c., mean extinction of life; but I think the language and the following chapters of Revelation show that the in-

fluence and power of these two witnesses will for a time cease; that is, for whatever time is signified by "three days and a half." At that time I believe that all the powers of earth will rejoice over the death of these two witnesses, as expressed in verse ten: "Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." "And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." This seems to be in perfect harmony with the language of Paul, when he says that we which are alive and remain at his coming shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend with a shout, and with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.—See 1 Thess. iv. I believe the time is fast approaching when the church will lose her influence for a time, after which she will rise from the dead (so to speak); after which the two witnesses, embracing all the redeemed in both dispensations, will hear that voice from heaven saying, "Come up hither."

I could write more, but will forbear. These are simply some of my thoughts upon this glorious subject. Hoping to be numbered with that innumerable host, I am yours in tribulation;

H. J. REDD.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 20, 1888.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—In reply to you I will say that I regard the sentiments expressed in my article, published in the SIGNS for January 15th, as in accordance with the doctrine uniformly maintained by the Licking Association. In proof of this I will refer to the Circular Letter adopted in 1852, and published in the SIGNS, volume xx., page 165; and again adopted in 1886, and published in the SIGNS, volume liv., page 234. This Circular having been twice adopted, the last time so recently, reference to it will be sufficient.

The main points in my article were:

1. The man who cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again is a sinner; and it is proper to say, The sinner is born again; or, The sinner is the subject of the new birth.
2. The child of God, as he is manifest in this world, has two distinct natures, the one earthy, derived from the earthly Adam by a natural birth, the other spiritual, derived from the Lord Jesus Christ by a spiritual birth; and that these are antagonistic the one to the other.
3. The elect are sinners of Adam's fallen race, chosen from the beginning unto sal-

vation; that they have eternal life, which was given them in Christ before the world began; that by virtue of this eternal life they had a spiritual existence in Christ before the world began, as by virtue of their natural life they had an existence in Adam when he was created, and that in this life they are properly said to have an eternal, vital union with Christ their Head; that it was for the elect Christ died, which he could not have done if they had not been sinners in their earthly nature, and also united to him in spiritual life before their fall in Adam; that the word "elect," as used in the Scriptures, always refers to them as those for whom it was necessary Christ should die. 4. That the elder, or natural man, shall serve the younger, or spiritual man. I will now quote from the Circular:

"And the children being partakers of flesh and blood before he took part of the same, not only shows their prior existence thereunto, but shows the reason why he himself likewise did so, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them, *the children, his people, his elect, his sheep, from the bondage of death.* Hence the law was violated and the curse incurred by man in the flesh. The law was magnified and made honorable and the curse removed from his chosen seed (who sinned in their Adamic or natural relation) by God manifest in the flesh."

"This compares with the following: God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners (dead in trespasses and sins, and carnally minded), Christ died for us. *Even when we were dead in sin, God quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together with him, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.* What are the consequences growing out of the great love wherewith he loved us, and who will not suffer his compassion or his faithfulness to fail? It clearly brings to view the fact that as it relates to the *preservation of the children or elect from eternal death*, God has purposed in himself *their regeneration, and their being born again*, in order to the love, faith and practice of the gospel as a rule of life, to be the order of his house."

"And he will not be frustrated; for God's *chosen are his elect according to his foreknowledge*, having from the beginning chosen them (the *sheep*) to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit *unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ.*"

"Hence it is entirely his act, and of his own will that their embodiment manifestly takes place. Baptized into one body by one Spirit, and made to drink into one Spirit. *As such it is said, 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.'* Born of water and of the Spirit to enter therein. It is also said, 'We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.'

What are we to understand from this language used by Christ, compared with what Paul has said in this place? First, we are to understand that *as natural men* we are born children of the flesh, and *can neither see the kingdom nor enter therein.*"

"Hence their being spiritually generated proceeds from their being that seed; as *perfectly passive in their being generated, quickened and born spiritually as when naturally.* The question may arise, How can these things be? We answer, It is all the Lord's work. He generates, he quickens, and *he brings both to the natural and the spiritual birth.*"

"That is the reason why 'we,' as members of the same body with you, dear brethren, beloved of the Lord, are bound and under obligations to render or give thanks unto God for you, because God hath from the beginning chosen *you unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit* and belief of the truth, *whereunto he called you* by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—See SIGNS, vol. xx., pp. 165, 166; vol. liv., pp. 234, 235.

The whole of this Circular is according to my understanding of the truth, but I have repeated only such portions as are necessary to show agreement with the sentiments expressed by me. It is clearly the mind of the writer, who I suppose to have been Elder Thomas P. Dudley, that the chosen, the elect, the children, the sheep, are the same characters, and that they are such as are saved from the bondage of death; that the same who were preserved from eternal death are born again; that when we were dead in sin God quickened us together with Christ; that we are to understand from the language of Jesus that the one who cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again is the natural man, born of the flesh, and that he must be born of water and of the Spirit in order to enter therein; that those who were chosen unto salvation from the beginning are also called, which term is only used in the Scriptures with reference to the chosen vessels of mercy. When it is remembered that Elder Dudley held the view that the birth of water meant the natural birth, the meaning as expressed above becomes more pronounced and clear. The *Italics* in the above are mine.

I will now quote a few extracts from letters published by Elder Dudley in the SIGNS:

1. "Our Surety met every demand that law and justice had against his chosen bride, being put to death in the flesh, and quickened by the Spirit; and yet this did not impart to her a qualification to appreciate his glorious work. Still it thunders in her ears, 'Ye must be born again.'—Letter to Elder Theobald, vol. xlv., p. 53.

2. "But, brother Beebe, this indispensable work of the Mediator did not prepare men to 'serve God acceptably with reverence and godly

fear? 'Ye must be born again,' or ye cannot enter into or see the kingdom of God. A higher order of life, even eternal life, must be had to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Without this birth we should be unprepared for the heavenly glory."—Vol. xlii., p. 29.

3. "His children, born of God, are possessed of two whole and distinct natures, neither nature contributing anything essentially to the existence of the other."—Vol. xxxvi., p. 109.

4. "The whole Mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus was directed to the redemption and salvation of his chosen seed, who sinned in relation to and by virtue of their oneness in nature with the earthly Adam."—Vol. xliii., p. 37.

5. "If your correspondent be a subject of the new birth, he is not a stranger to the warfare."—Vol. xliii., p. 37.

6. "I then saw the antagonism of the two natures possessed by every one born of the Spirit, out of which grows that warfare which so pains the heart of the christian."—Vol. xlii., p. 24.

7. "The elder Brother, the Lord Jesus, is partaker of two whole and distinct natures." "The younger brethren are partakers of two whole and distinct natures."—Vol. xlvi., p. 99.

8. "The adopted [which he has shown to be "a portion of the earthly Adam's family"] in the new birth only received the spirit of adoption. They now [in the resurrection] receive that for which they have been waiting, to wit, the redemption of the body."—Vol. xlvi., p. 28.

9. "The whole elect family, composed of Jews and Gentiles."—Vol. xxiii., p. 27.

10. "I have been fully satisfied for more than fifty years that the difficulty of the people of God in explaining the warfare which so distressingly annoys and perplexes them results from a want of understanding the relation they sustain to the Lord Jesus Christ, and their complex character as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty."—Vol. xlvi., p. 26.

11. "Every member of the family of the Lord Jesus, when brought to a knowledge of the holy character of that God who claims his obedience, the nature and extent of the claims of God's righteous law, the heinous nature and dire consequences of sin, his own guilty, helpless, and justly condemned situation," &c.—Volume xlviii., p. 28.

12. "The Bible nowhere, as I read it, taught that the man, the soul, the mind, the heart, the affections, the instincts of the natural man, are changed, but rather that a new heart and a right spirit, an entirely new and higher order of life, was given; the result of which was new views, new desires, new breathings, new appetites, new employments, new aspirations, of a spiritual, higher and holier character than those belonging to

the natural man. That his elder, or old man, 'shall serve the younger,' or new man. Now are the saints desirous to 'walk in the Spirit,' as a result of that holy implantation, to keep under the body, and bring it into subjection, to mortify the deeds of the body, to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts."—Volume xxxvi., p. 110.

The *Italics* in the second and sixth quotations are his; the rest are mine.

The above quotations are sufficient to show that every sentiment in my article has been expressed by Elder Dudley, for whom I entertained sentiments of profound esteem and love as a father in the ministry, and from whom it was my privilege to receive, from our first acquaintance in 1865 to our last interview, most gratifying and comforting expressions of unqualified fellowship, love, confidence and brotherly kindness, and that the association has recognized those sentiments as the truth. Not that I would refer to any association, or to any minister, however highly esteemed and loved, as authority for asserting the correctness of any point of doctrine. The inspired record only is authority.

Your brother in love of the truth,  
SILAS H. DURAND.

GHEENT, Ky., July 15, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a card of which the following is a copy:

"WILL you please give your views on Solomon's Song vii. 7, 8, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES? Also, I would like to know what the word queens (vi. 8) has reference to. Ever since I have had a home with the Old School Baptists I have taken the SIGNS, and have been particularly interested in your letters which have appeared from time to time. May I inquire if you are a minister of the gospel?"  
MRS. A. L. DULIN.

In answer to sister Dulin's inquiry in regard to me personally, I am not what people call a minister of the gospel, but on the contrary am a very little member of a very small (in numbers) church of our order. I have had a name among God's dear people for near fifty-six years, and I rejoice to know that our Lord hath said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." But how delightful to God's dear people it is to meditate upon the sublime beauties revealed to them in his word. For their instruction the wise king of Israel was enabled to leave on record the subjects to which our sister has called attention, which are in these words, "This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples." In the eighth and tenth verses of the eighth chapter we find it recorded, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when

she shall be spoken for?" "I am a wall, and my breasts like towers." In this figure we have two presented: one whose stature is like the palm tree. That tree produced a very delicious fruit, and among the ancients that tree was adopted as an emblem of victory. Then her stature was like one who produced delicious fruit, and was an emblem of victory, of triumph. Her breasts were like towers. From the breasts the children draw that nourishment which not only sustains them, but causes them to grow. She who says her breasts are like towers, and whose stature is like to the palm tree, is the church under the legal dispensation. Her children were all taught of the Lord. He gave the law, with all the wonderful things prefigured by it: all the wonderful things prefigured by the offerings under the law. From them the spiritual children of Israel draw that nourishment which makes them grow in a knowledge of our Lord and his wondrous works of love toward the children of men. Upon the things prefigured by those offerings and the things revealed by the prophets the spiritual children of Israel fed spiritually. They fed upon them because they all pointed to him who would come in power to receive in his own glorious person all things prefigured by those offerings; to receive the thrust of the sword of divine justice which should awake from its long slumber, to shed that blood without which there is no remission of sins. Viewing him by those offerings and through those prophecies they looked away to that wondrous day when he in glorious triumph, having laid down his life, would take it again. That day when he in his glorious exaltation would say, "I am he that was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore." They fed on these things. Everything pertaining to that legal service was figurative, and spiritual Israel was enabled by faith to look through those things to the great and wonderful triumph of God's people throughout that long dispensation. They received a good report through faith, but received not the promises, God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. The church under the legal dispensation could not be made perfect without us—without the church under the gospel dispensation; for they were all one in Christ Jesus. That church is brought to view under the figure of the little sister which hath no breasts. She did not need to have breasts, for the reason that the offerings under the law, which were the breasts that were like towers, were to that little sister all fulfilled. Her children by faith look to the great sacrifice made on Calvary in fulfillment of all things prefigured by the sacrifices under the law. Hence she hath no breasts. But the palm tree under favorable circumstances grew to a great height, and

its fruit was hidden away among its leaves in the top of the tree. It will be remembered that Solomon recorded these wonderful truths for our learning, and under his reign Israel was greatly blessed. The palm tree grew and flourished. Yes, spiritual Israel was greatly blessed by having given to them the many things that pointed to the coming of the Son of David, our spiritual Solomon. The children of Israel did not by their natural powers see that fruit and feed thereon. By those powers they saw the offerings under the law, but did not see and understand the wonderful things prefigured by them. The fruit of the olive tree was hidden by the foliage of that tree, away up in its top, and could not be seen by natural vision. But he who had the powers of spiritual vision given him was enabled to see in the outward forms and ceremonies of the law the great and wonderful things prefigured by the offerings made in the temple service, and see that fruit and eat thereof, and with delight hear their Lord say to them, "Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." But the stature of that church was beheld by king Solomon, who was a figure of Christ. Then it is Christ speaking to us and saying, "I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the branches thereof. Now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine." The wine made from the grapes of Palestine in the days of Solomon was the purest then known, and the grapes of that country the sweetest and most luscious that man had then eaten. The breasts of the bride under the legal dispensation are said to be as clusters of the vine. The Lord told Moses to speak unto the children of Israel, and say, "Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even."—Exodus xxix. 38, 39. Through these offerings spiritual Israel beheld the great anti-type, the Lord Jesus Christ, nailed to the cross, in the morning and at evening saying, in mournful and plaintive tones, It is finished, and giving up the ghost. Then they through those offerings beheld him who "taketh away the sin of the world." Surely here was a rich cluster of the sweetest fruit; for in it they beheld their redemption from the awful curses of the law. In it they beheld that which forever silenced the thunderings of Sinai, and the church rising in glorious triumph through that offering; yea, looking forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Surely that was a rich cluster on which spiritual Israel fed and grew in a knowledge of their Lord, viewing him as the redemption of Israel.

But he says, "I will go up to the palm tree; I will take hold of the boughs thereof." He went up to the

palm tree, and by that great offering removed the curse of sin that rested upon it; yea, he healed it of the blighting consequences of iniquity, and he took hold of its boughs. The prophet says, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." When he takes hold of the boughs of the palm tree he surely has turned his hand upon the little ones. Ah, my dear sister, if you are a child of God, an heir to immortal glory, you are one of those boughs, one of those little ones; and O how wondrously safe you feel when you are enabled by grace to hope and trust that your glorious Lord has taken hold of you, has turned his gracious and protecting hand upon you. It is then that you rejoice in the power, wisdom, goodness and mercy of your ever-to-be-adored Redeemer. You by faith see in his wondrous name all things needed for your protection in time and for your final and glorious triumph throughout eternity.

But the apostle says they (spiritual Israel) received a good report through faith, but received not the promises, God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. The promises all centered in Christ Jesus, and they could not receive those promises till he by one offering had forever perfected them that are sanctified. All were sanctified, set apart, in the eternal covenant of redemption; therefore those who lived under the legal dispensation and those who have lived in the gospel dispensation are all one in Christ Jesus. No part of the glorious church of our God can be perfect in the absence of a single member, in the absence of a single one of the redeemed, for she is but one. He says, "My dove, my undefiled, is but one." And she is one with her glorious Head and Husband. He says, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." When our Lord uttered that prayer of which the above is part, he was about to pass through that baptism of blood from which he came in glorious triumph. He says, "Mine own arm brought salvation unto me." In that salvation was embraced all that were one with him. In that glorious unity with him his people by his one offering were redeemed; and in that unity he said, "Mine own arm brought salvation unto me." Then if he was saved from the sting of death and the victory of the grave, so all that are one with him were saved from all the consequences of sin and are made kings and priests unto God. Yes, saved with that eternal and complete salvation which leaves nothing under the dominion of death. While you, my dear sister, are a sinner of Ad-

am's fallen race, and consequently under the power and reign of sin and death, you are made by the great sacrifice offered by your Lord completely and perfectly free from that condemnation which rested upon you by reason of your earthly relationship. Then all these mortal and corruptible bodies which all the saints have, by reason of their relationship to the first Adam, will be changed from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible. Then their redemption in their glorious Lord will be complete, for he is their resurrection and their life. Then he will have taken hold of all the boughs of the palm tree. Then he will have redeemed all his people, whose faith took hold of Jesus, by being made spiritual, and thus enabled to look through the offerings under the law to the coming and humiliation and suffering of our Lord, as well as those who received the promises after he had come. Before he came, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and all the saints in those dispensations, by faith beheld him who was their redemption, and rejoiced in him, seeing by faith that he had taken hold of the boughs, had turned their sorrow and desolation into rejoicing. For they, like Moses, esteemed the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt—than the treasures of a land of bondage. This world to the dear saints in all ages has been a land of bondage. From its corruptions they have ever sought and prayed for deliverance. When our Lord has taken hold of them and given them that faith which works by love, the shackles of that bondage have been loosed and they have been enabled to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. In him they are one. There is but one fold and one Shepherd. She whose breasts were as clusters of the vine, and the little sister, lose their distinction in their glorious Lord, and in the blessed and glorious morning of the resurrection they will all hear his voice and come forth to the resurrection of life. Here, my dear sister, will be consummated all things for which our Lord laid aside the glory he had with the Father before the world was. To this wonderful period all the teachings of the Bible, all the wonderful manifestation of the glorious attributes of our God declared therein, look. When the dear saints are enabled by the Spirit to look into those infinitely wonderful and glorious teachings, and comprehend just a little of their beauties, they are filled with praise and adoration and made to cry out, The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let the earth rejoice and the isles of the sea be glad.

This language of the wise king of Israel about which I have in my weak way been trying to talk to you, my dear sister, is part of those teachings. When we turn to that great storehouse of infinite wisdom revealed to man, we have a subject which,

like its divine author, is too great for us. We cannot attain unto it. It begins at the very dawn of time, and continues through ages and centuries, to the end of the book of revelations, making known and revealing to the spiritually minded sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty the great, glorious and wonderful character of that God in whom all the hopes of the redeemed center. It presents to us man in his lost, ruined and undone condition by reason of sin, and it presents Christ as the Redeemer and Savior of his people, and presents his people in holy and everlasting triumph through the finished work of that Redeemer. Then how delightful it is to the dear saints to behold in it the glorious things revealed to them. The spiritually minded descendant of Abraham saw in the offerings under the law the great antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, shedding his blood for the remission of sin; and he fed daily on the rich clusters of the vine spoken of in the text to which our sister has called our attention. While the Jews looked forward by faith through the offerings to that great day when the Messenger of the covenant would suddenly come to the temple, and were enabled to wait with joyful anticipation for that day to come, you, my dear sister, and all the saints of this and other days, are blessed with the record which God has given you, and you are fed, and grow in grace and knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Thus our God hath provided better things for us. We have the record of the sealing of all the promises by the blood of the glorious Son of God. The spiritually minded Jew looked forward to the coming of our Lord through the shadows of the law, while the saints of this day look back, guided by God's Spirit, through the revelation that God has given us of his Son, and both feed and grow upon the rich clusters that God has in his wisdom and mercy bestowed upon his people, and to his name is due all the glory.

At the conclusion of each article that I write this thought comes up forcibly, Perhaps this will be the last time the dear saints will see any of my feeble and rambling thoughts. I am now in my seventy-sixth year; and as the days and years pass by, I seem to be more closely united to God's dear people, and every cause of bitterness that arises among them wounds me more and more deeply. Although my general health has greatly improved since I laid aside the cares of a busy life, and is much better than it was eight years ago, yet I feel that I am standing on the edge of the tomb, and thus standing upon the confines of a never ending eternity. I say to you, my dear brethren and sisters, that my heart's desire and prayer to God for you is that you may be saved from all confusion, all strife, all malice, all guile and all evil speaking one of another, and that you may in all your church relations live together in the full en-

joyment of that commandment which our Lord left on record for us, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

Sister Dulin will please excuse me for not writing upon that other subject to which she invites my attention. And you, brethren editors, will dispose of this as you may deem best, and believe me

Affectionately yours;

H. COX.

#### HASSELL'S HISTORY.

I CONSIDER this a work of great value. It is entitled, "A History of the Church of God." We are to bear in mind that this, like all other books except the Bible, is but a record of the acts and words of uninspired men, drawn from sources, after leaving scriptural times, which are necessarily not absolutely certain, and written by men who are fallible. The Scriptures present the only infallible record, the only spiritual history, of the spiritual people of God. We are to remember also that this history does not, as histories and other books written by erroneous men often do, present itself as a standard of truth, nor claim either for the expressions and acts of any man or any body of men which it records, or for the opinions of the historian himself, that they are authority for the belief of any child of God. That authority exists only in the writings of inspired men; and the knowledge and belief of it can come only by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which each must experience for himself alone, as it is written, "They shall be all taught of God." The true doctrine is not established by associations, or churches, or councils, or by ministers, however profound their experience and gifts; nor are the decisions and opinions rendered by such to be set up as standards for their own or future generations, by which views of doctrine and order are to be tested. "To the law and to the testimony" must every individual christian and every church in every age come, and by that standard alone must every word and act in every age be tested. In the Preface of this work it has been well said, "I lay no claim to inspiration or infallibility. I believe the Old and New Testament Scriptures to be absolutely the only inspired and infallible book in human literature. By this divine standard I desire the present volume and every creatural work to be finally tested, to be accepted if and when in accordance, and rejected if and when not in accordance, with the standard."

In this history the visible church of God is traced clearly through all the ages. By deep, extended and careful research, for which not only strong mental powers and the gift of spiritual knowledge, but also profound learning, especially in the languages, were necessary, clear testimony is brought from many sources and directions, pointing definitely to

the "little flock" from generation to generation, and clearly designating them, in distinction from all other professed churches in every age, as the "flock of God." The author beautifully says, "While gross darkness covers the rich, proud and corrupt Egypt of the world as of old, the few poor, humble and despised Israel of God are blessed with divine light in their dwellings; and to the spiritual mind it is intensely interesting and edifying to observe the providential course and circumstances of that heavenly light as it comes down to us through the historical wilderness of the ages. Straight and narrow, high and holy, spiritual and divine, is the mysterious path along which patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, and all the dear people of God, have been led by the Spirit and providence of the Most High."

Some may be startled and ready to denounce such a book upon reading an expression of sentiments recorded as the belief of men of God, which they are fully assured are not according to the teaching of the word; but such should consider that a history is not a sermon, or a written discourse upon doctrine and order and experience, but a recital of what has been said and done both by the people of God and their enemies, and that a correct history of the church cannot but record many errors in practice and doctrine. There has always been more or less of errors in the true church, as in five of the seven churches of Asia; and there have been errors enough in the writings and teachings of the best and most spiritual of uninspired men to show us that none since the days of the apostles can be set up as a standard or authority. What we consult a history for is to know what men did and said, not what the historian thinks they ought to have done and said. In such a history as this we want all such marks presented as show them to answer to the scriptural description of the Lord's people; not only their own course, but the course of their enemies toward them, and the language concerning them used by such as we know to be enemies of the truth, and every word and event that can add to the concentration of light upon them, to show them to be the gospel church. My belief in the doctrine of God our Savior, in any part of that doctrine, as election, predestination, or salvation by grace, does not at all depend upon, nor is it affected by, what any other has believed or now believes; although it may be affected and directed by the testimony which is thus brought in presenting the belief of the other, which answers to the same testimony written in my heart by the Spirit of the living God. What I believe because any other man believes and asserts it, is not with me a spiritual belief, even though it be the truth. But when by the preaching of that truth to me by the servant of God it meets in my soul an experi-

ence of the same, I believe it by his preaching, even as God has given it to me.—1 Cor. iii. 5.

In a faithful history, therefore, we must expect to find some erroneous sentiments that have been held and zealously defended by godly men. It has been so in every age, that men who have been most comforting and instructive ministers of the gospel have differed with each other in their understanding on some points of doctrine, and on the meaning of some Scriptures, and especially has that difference appeared prominent when they wrote; and perhaps their writing, which would be all of their work that was transmitted to future generations, would be the least spiritual of anything they did. But it is a great gratification and comfort to trace and follow the church in her visible organization through all the changes of passing ages, and observe how the doctrine and order of the gospel has been preserved in the church, notwithstanding the differences of her members and ministers on various points from time to time, as at present, and the occasional departures from the doctrine and order to a greater or less extent, and that the truth of salvation by grace has been held in its integrity by this people, and by them alone, through all the course of time.

It is truly a great work that our dear brother Hassell and his father, who was so loved and esteemed by all who knew him, have been, as I believe, enabled by the Lord to do; and I feel that it will prove of true interest and value to all lovers of the truth who read it. It seems to me that no one who is interested in the church and truth of God can read this intensely interesting volume without being greatly benefited by it.

I learn that our dear brother, in his arduous and extended labor upon this work, has incurred great expense, and become heavily involved in debt, and I hope the brethren may be led to remember him in his embarrassment in a practical way. I am pleased to know that there are movements among brethren in some parts of the country to come to his relief, although he has never, that I ever heard of, himself requested or intimated such a thing. He has as yet, I believe, received nothing from the sale of the book, as it has not yet paid the cost of publication, which was far greater than the original estimate, as the book is fully three times as large as was at first intended; yet it is sold at the originally named price. Its execution in printing and binding certainly does credit to the publishers. I hope a sufficient number of books may yet be sold to not only pay the cost of publication, but make him some compensation for this labor of love; and that his debt of two thousand dollars may be made up to him by those throughout our land who are interested in the book, the which is the fullest, truest and most authentic history of the church of God that we have

among all the histories written by men since apostolic days.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 23, 1888.

WESTCLIFFE, Colo., Dec. 14, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The December first number of the SIGNS seemed to me to contain more of the "fat things full of marrow" than any other number for some time past. It may be that I was in a more proper frame of spirit to receive. Be that as it may, I received much comfort in reading this number of the SIGNS. Upon reading brother Belknap's request for your views, I read carefully the editorial reply, as I had had much meditation upon the same subject; but as brethren Beebe did not give such reply as I wished for, I feel like writing some of my thoughts upon the subject.

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."—John iii. 7. I understand a birth to be the bringing forth or making manifest something that existed before. When a child is born into the world, the fact of its being born does not make it a child: it was a child before it was born. Now I wish to notice the language used by the Savior to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." If I were to say, I am going to Westcliffe again, it would be understood that I had been there before. So I understand the words "born again" to imply a previous birth. Nicodemus had been born according to nature, a natural birth; and Jesus tells him, "Except a man [born before] be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

I wish now to give a little of my own experience, for in doing so I can testify to that which I do know, and that for myself and not another. I do know that I am subject to natural thirst and hunger, and nothing but natural water and food will satisfy my thirst or hunger. I well remember that there was a time when I cared for naught else but the things of nature that surrounded me. I find also that I have natural desires, passions, joys and sorrows. But a time came when a change took place within this same man, J. H. Yeoman. I was possessed of a hungering and thirsting that nothing in nature would satisfy. Things which I once took pleasure in, now were grievous; things I once loved, now I hated; and things that I now love, I once hated. O what a change indeed had taken place within this man! So great a change had taken place that even my associates, who had not experienced a like change, inquired of me, "What is the matter with you?" And when I tried to tell them about it, they accused me, yes, this same man Yeoman, of being crazy. I find that while a wonderful change has taken place, I have the same natural thirst, hunger, passions and desires I had wherein I was born a natural birth. When I compare the two hungerings, thirstings, passions, desires, &c., I find them so opposite

one to the other that I conclude I, a man of Adam's posterity, have been born again.

When I try to comprehend this complex man I find myself to be, first born of the flesh, then born of the Spirit, a subject of two births, two men, as it were, in one, I am, like David, made to exclaim, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me" to fully comprehend.

The apostle Paul in describing the man who is a subject of two births, denominates the man of the first birth the "outward man," and the man of the second birth the "new man." The outer man and the inner man. The one born after the flesh minds the things of the flesh; the one born of the Spirit minds the things of the Spirit. So then this same man has two minds; one a carnal mind, the other a spiritual mind; and these are contrary the one to the other. So that "I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me." "I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind [spiritual mind], and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." "So then with the mind [not carnal mind] I myself [no other man but Yeoman] serve the law of God; but with the flesh [the old man, which is Yeoman still] the law of sin."

It was a great mystery to Nicodemus as to "How can these things be?" And so it is to every one who has not experienced the second birth, or been born again.

I have said that a child being born a natural birth does not make it a child. It being born manifests that it was a child before its birth. So I understand that being born of the Spirit does not make it a spiritual child. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son [not to make you sons] into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6.

I have tried in my weak and blundering way to give in as plain a manner as I can my view of who it is that needs to be born again, and needs the conscience purged from dead works, to serve the living God.

Brethren Beebe, the foregoing is submitted to your better judgment, for publication or rejection.

Yours in hope,  
J. H. YEOMAN.

LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE.

THIS divine command is to the brotherhood of believers in Christ, who are taught of God to love one another, and are commanded to be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, and "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." O that the love of God may be shed abroad in the hearts of his people, and that the Spirit of love and peace may rule in them, causing them to walk in love as the dear children of God, as Christ also hath

loved us, and laid down his life for us; for as a people we greatly need the charity that suffereth long, and is kind, and which is greater than faith and hope. Paul's command to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" is, "Follow after charity." Therefore, will the dear household of faith kindly suffer an afflicted and poor brother, who desires the peace of Jerusalem, to entreat them in love to consider and heed the above divine commands? O, brethren, let us consider the new commandment of our new Master, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "These things I command you, that ye love one another." How binding and sacred is the obligation of the brotherhood to keep these divine commands of the holy, loving Master. Shall we trample them under our feet, and war after the flesh? God forbid. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love."—Paul. "Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."—1 Peter iv. 7, 8. How necessary to the peace of Zion that these things be observed, and that we all remember that our "God is love." For now there is much to call for mourning and supplication, repentance and confession, forgiveness and charity. It is too sorrowfully true of our people that we are biting and devouring one another, and are being consumed one of another. I am now growing old in the service of our Baptist brotherhood, and never before have I known such a time of distress, nor witnessed such a tendency to denounce, cut off and reject one another from fellowship. It is truly alarming and lamentable, and calls for sorrow, and earnest crying unto God. O that we might all be clothed with humility, remembering our own infirmities, and heeding this admonition of James, "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." O, brethren, may these

truths sink down into our hearts. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." "Our beloved brother Paul" thus instructs and commands the called of God, who are under law to Christ; therefore whoever does not thus do makes himself a transgressor, and sins against Christ. Paul again says, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Paul therefore enjoins it upon this household of God to "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." The beloved John writes, saying, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God, love his brother also." Now, by so doing—fulfilling all this law of love, the brotherhood would "Let brotherly love continue;" and then might it be said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Then the divine evidence that we have passed from death unto life would abide in us, by the sweet knowledge that we love the brethren. But the word says, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." Therefore all other gifts and possessions of a religious nature are unreal and vain, without love. We may be ever so correct in the letter of truth, very strong in our belief of Bible doctrine, and zealous for a form of sound words, all of which are proper and right if the heart is right; yet if we do not love the brotherhood we are either self-deceived or a hypocrite, and our religion is vain. Hear Paul, "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mys-

teries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Charity is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. The first fruit of the Spirit is love; and closely connected with and following it are "joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." If divine love dwells and rules in our hearts, we will act toward the brotherhood according to this heavenly charity. Paul tells how this is: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." Blessed and happy indeed would be the brotherhood if charity abounded in the hearts of all the household of faith; for then would all count it joy to "Let brotherly love continue," and esteem it a happy service to "love one another with a pure heart fervently." Then would the disciples of Jesus happily fulfill this command of their loving Master, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The dear Lord and Master says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

O how pre-eminent, therefore, is this gift and grace of love; and how each brother should seek to excel in this greatest of the christian graces, charity. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Love is the end unto which the God of love hath chosen and blessed his people, that they should be holy and blameless before him in love. Our loving Lord says, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love." Lord, help us. "Let brotherly love continue."

D. BARTLEY.

NEW CASTLE, Ind., March 3, 1888.

TYRONE, Ky., Jan. 22, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year is gone, and numbered with the past. As there is no preaching near enough for me to go to to-day, my mind seems to be drawn out in love to the brethren, to all those that love God. "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." This love that the apostle is speaking of is not taught in the Sunday Schools that some boast of so much, who say that the Sunday School is where they teach the children to love and to know the Lord; but I do not think they can find a "Thus saith the Lord" for it. The apostle Paul says they are taught of God to love one another; and Peter says, "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." Then

if God makes the heart pure, and teaches them this love, they can and will love one another with a pure heart, and not until then. Now, just for argument's sake, suppose we try to love some one whom we have never seen nor heard from. We cannot love him. Just so, on the other hand, none ever loved God before they were made manifest and taught of God to know and to love him. Jesus says, in Matthew xi. 27, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Then it is by revelation that they are taught these things—that is, to know God; for God is a Spirit, and they must be born of the Spirit before they can know him or love him. God first loved them; for he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." God always loved his people, for an everlasting love has no end to it; and it is with this same love that his people love him back again. Now the child that has been born of God says, "The things that I once loved, now I hate; and the things that I once hated, now I love." This proves that the natural man cannot love God. He may think he is loving God, and serving him, just as Paul thought he was doing when on his way to Damascus to bind the saints and all that called on the name of the Lord, and cast them into prison; also, when he stood by and consented to the stoning of Stephen to death. Now, when Paul was stricken down by the wayside, and Jesus spake to him, Paul said, "Who art thou, Lord?" Paul did not know the Lord until then, although he firmly believed he was serving God before. When Jesus opened the eyes of his understanding, and unstopped his deaf ears, and made himself known to him as his Savior, how different he was. Instead of breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the church of God, we find him going from place to place preaching Christ and him crucified; for he said that he was determined not to know anything among his brethren but Christ and him crucified. He was taught in the school of Christ to preach these things.

Your brother, saved by grace, if saved at all,

J. J. WATERFILL.

AURORA, Ill., Feb. 12, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—I have taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES continuously, I think, since my father's death in 1842, and he had taken it several years. I have therefore a nearly complete file for almost half a century. As I am in my seventy-fifth year, and have not probably many years of life before me, and cannot expect to read them much more myself, it has occurred to me that there might be some church of the Old Baptist order that would like to pur-

chase the set for the use of its members, many of whom, being of a later generation, may not have had the privilege of seeing the earlier issues. The church collectively owning the volumes, each member would be able to enjoy the reading of all. The numbers for each year are stitched together, and they are mostly in good preservation, though some of the earlier volumes are mutilated and imperfect. I will dispose of the set for twenty dollars, but am not able to defray the expense of transportation. The cash may accompany the order, or they will be sent C. O. D.

I have often thought of calling Elder Durand's attention to the subject of collecting the very interesting articles scattered through the SIGNS in past years, from the pens of the various members of his family (himself included), into a pamphlet that would not be too high-priced for persons of moderate means to purchase; those particularly containing experience, or scraps of family history, with any additional details he might feel disposed to give. I cannot but think that such a work would be acceptable to the household of faith generally. Will Elder Durand please think the matter over?

MRS. F. L. BAGG.

CAMDEN, Ark., Feb. 21, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Once more through the kind mercy of God I am enabled to write you, for the purpose of remitting our subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We feel that we cannot do without it, so long as the Lord enables us to read it and to pay for it. We derive much comfort from the many able communications and editorials therein contained. I love the SIGNS for its strict adherence to what I believe to be the truth as it is in Jesus, and what I have understood to be contended for by Primitive Baptists ever since I have had a name among them, which is about fifty-six years. I am sorry to say that here, as well as elsewhere, there are some who wish to modify that belief. The predestination of all things, they say, makes God the author of sin, &c. But there has enough been said, and ably said, through the SIGNS upon the subject, without anything from one so little and ignorant as I am.

Affectionately yours,

A. W. BACCHUS.

THANKS!

WE wish to express our thanks to "A Stranger" for his liberality in sending us five dollars (\$5) for, as he says, "the benefit of your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES." We especially appreciate this favor as a substantial proof of his approbation of our course in defending the principles of truth set forth in the first number of our paper, over fifty years ago.—ED.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., APRIL 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF G. BEEBE'S SONS.

SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE. (Ephesians iv. 15.)

So GREAT is the mystery of godliness that every step in the pathway of obedience to the commandments of our gracious Redeemer is in opposition to the way which seems right to the natural reason of the saints themselves. While they who follow Jesus are called to a perpetual warfare, from which there is no discharge, that path in which they must walk is exclusively designated as the "way of peace."—Luke i. 79. Since it cannot be possible that the infinite wisdom of God was ignorant of the enmity of the carnal mind against divine truth, it is evident that this state of conflict is included in the purpose which he designed for the development of his eternal choice of his people, that they should be saved from their sins, and that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. To the natural mind it seemed that our Lord himself was warring against the righteous law which God gave to Israel when he was proclaiming to guilty sinners the gospel of salvation by grace; but by faith it is revealed to those who are taught of God that he was the very Servant of the Holy One, who alone was able to fulfill and magnify that law. In its letter and in its spirit he did fulfill its every precept, and the strict justice of God is magnified in the salvation of every sinner for whom the blood of Jesus was shed. The love of God which gave Jesus to die for the sins of his chosen people is not more clearly displayed in the salvation of sinners than is the inflexible truth and justice by which it was rendered needful that the vials of almighty wrath should be poured out upon his devoted head. It is indeed true that in the legal dispensation was revealed the infinite perfection of divine justice, so that in its light sin did appear exceeding sinful; but it was reserved for the gospel of the grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ to manifest the wonderful wisdom and goodness of God in saving his people from their sins, and presenting them before the scrutiny of infinite holiness as being perfectly free from pollution, and without blame before him in love.

In this earnest entreaty Paul was moved by the Spirit of Christ to exhort the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus to walk in accordance with the faith which was their only evidence of acceptance with God. Professing to be called by grace to trust in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ for justification in the sight of God, it was important that they should show the power of that faith by walking

as children of light. To this end the law of Christ has enjoined upon all who love him the particular steps which are requisite to mark them as his disciples. In vain do any profess to love him while disregarding his directions. He says, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John xv. 14. No man can have this love to the Lord unless the Spirit of Christ dwells in him. That living Spirit will produce the holy fruit of love to God, and cause the subject of its living power to hunger and thirst after righteousness. To such characters as are led by that Spirit the highest privilege they can desire is to be found walking in obedience to every word which has the authority of the Lord, in whom is all their hope for salvation. Thus they are distinguished from all those idolatrous worshipers who are seeking to obtain divine favor by rendering unwilling service to an imagined law which they do not love. In this peculiar distinguishing mark the saints unconsciously fulfill the declaration of the Lord by David, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalm cx. 3. The law of a carnal commandment spoke to the fleshly descendants of Jacob, requiring of them implicit obedience to all its rigorous demands. It availed the delinquent Israelite nothing to profess love to the holy law which he had violated. There was no room in the inexorable demands of that covenant for repentance or tears. To all his earnest entreaties for mercy the law could only reply with the awful thunder of its unmitigated curse. Although all the law and the prophets hang on the injunction of love to God and to our neighbor, there was no provision in that dispensation for giving power to answer its demand. Therefore "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. As there was no life-giving power in that law, it could only show the strict justice of the sentence which consigned to death the whole guilty race of the sinful Adam. The proclamation of this just sentence is speaking the truth; but it is not the truth which is spoken in love. It is designated as "the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones," as in contrast with the ministration of the Spirit, which is the revelation of the way of life in Christ Jesus. There is no other "truth in love," except that which is revealed in the gospel of the grace of God; and all that truth is embodied in our Lord Jesus. He is exclusively "the truth."

In his efforts to rob the saints of their rest in the faith of their triumphant Redeemer, the tempter often assails them by referring to that which is abstractly true, and then perverting that truth into an accusation against them. So he cited the written words of Scripture when

he tempted the Captain of our salvation (Matthew iv. 6); but he was not able to seduce our Lord with his deceitful wiles. Although he quoted the very words of the inspired record, he did not speak the truth, because he could not be led by that holy principle of love which is the fruit of the Spirit of God. Even the truth of God is changed into a lie by those who have not received the love of the truth, that they might be saved.—Rom. i. 25; 2 Thess. ii. 10. And since the saints can find no comfort in anything else but that truth, when they are thus bewildered it is not possible that they should be able to rest in anything which can be suggested by their natural mind. As nothing but the truth can be their support in the severe trial of their faith, so that truth must be presented in love, or it can have no comfort for them in their times of need. They often prove this in their daily tribulations; for they find even the rich consolation of the inspired Scriptures an empty word when they would draw from it that assurance which they have realized when the Spirit of truth applied it in love to their troubled hearts. This is not a merely accidental fact, but it is one of those wonderful provisions of divine grace by which they are ever reminded of their continual dependence upon the unfailing love of their precious Redeemer for every good and perfect gift. That very love forbids that they should realize comfort in trusting to any efforts of their own, or looking to any created arm for support. When they have built their expectations on the sandy foundation of their own works or watchfulness, it is in love that the Lord disappoints their false hopes. That love is inseparable from the truth of that salvation which is by grace in Christ Jesus. It shines in all the doctrine of the gospel, and is found in every ordinance which our Lord has established in his church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. It is only when this heavenly fruit of the Spirit is controlling the saints that they are enabled to rise above the afflictions and tribulations which surround them, and to rejoice in the full assurance of that divine truth which is revealed in them as their ever-present witness that they are led by that Spirit which is the only source of all truth. Whatever gloomy doubts may be suggested by the tempter, and however keenly the reproaches of conscience may be felt, there can be no mistake about the fact that Christ dwells in every one who receives the truth in love. So, however weak and trembling may be the manner in which that truth is spoken, if it only be as our text exhorts, "Speaking the truth in love," it is far better for the profit of them who are born of God than the most logical and eloquent address which was ever devised by the wisdom of the world, if it have not that divine seal.

The manner in which the truth is

spoken in love is as peculiar as the truth itself and the character of those who thus speak it. It is not confined to such as have the gift of language to express in words the glorious truth of the gospel on which their hope is founded. As the penitential tear and the earnest cry for grace and mercy constitute in the sight of God that worship which is in spirit and in truth, so that feeling of utter helplessness and entire dependence upon the sovereign grace of God in every time of need is a perpetual "Speaking the truth in love." The very consciousness of deep sinfulness is an expression of this great truth. Nothing short of infinite power and grace could afford any hope to one who knows the exceeding sinfulness of sin in his own heart. Therefore when the sinner who is conscious of his guilt is made to cry to God for mercy and grace, in that very cry he confesses the truth of divine omnipotence, and that there is salvation in no other name but that which God has revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is in this true and loving sense that "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."—1 Cor. xii. 3.

Paul speaks of some who preached Christ of envy and strife, supposing by such contentious preaching to add affliction to his bonds.—Phil. i. 15, 16. It is doubtless true that such characters have continued to persecute the church since the primitive age. Certainly, however much they may proclaim the letter of the doctrine of Christ, they do not obey this admonition by "Speaking the truth in love." In the judgment of our King the thoughts and intents of the heart are all "naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do;" so that the unuttered groaning of the helpless prisoner who feels himself in the bondage of sin is known unto our gracious Judge, and he will deliver all such in strict accordance with the demands of infinite justice. So Peter says, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." In wisdom he has reserved to himself the work of judging the world in righteousness. To no created being has he given the ability to discern the thoughts of the heart. This is done exclusively by that Word of God which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.—Hebrews iv. 12. It requires nothing short of the power of that almighty Word to render righteous judgment in the case of every sinner; and such as are subjects of salvation will ever find it necessary to appeal from the verdict of their own mind, as did Job from the decision of his three friends, to the judgment which is always in righteousness. When he said that God had delivered him to the ungodly, and turned him over into the hands of the wicked, his strong refuge was in the fact that he could claim, "Now, behold, my witness is

in heaven, and my record is on high."—Job xvi. 19. There is no other witness whose testimony can secure the perfect justification of the conscious sinner; hence it is not strange that when he is judged in the absence of the testimony of this Witness he is always found guilty, even though he sits in judgment on his own case. The love of truth and righteousness forbids that he should be acquitted by the sacrifice of the justice of God, and without the conclusive testimony of this faithful and true Witness there is no justification for any of the fallen sons of the sinful Adam. Since it is of such vital importance to the saints that this truth should be ever present with them, it is well for them that it is not only revealed in the Scriptures and in the individual experience of every saint, but that it is continually impressed upon them in their everyday experience. Hence, when they tell of their own weakness and total lack of merit in themselves, they are "Speaking the truth in love" to the comfort of every troubled soul; for it is in this experience of utter destitution and poverty that the saints can unite in testifying to the grace of God that bringeth salvation, which is their only hope.

Since none but those who have the Spirit of Christ can love his truth, it is evident that no others can speak it in love. Even though they should speak that which is abstractly true, they cannot counterfeit the love which is peculiarly characteristic of those who are truly the children of God. This fruit of the Spirit is never found outside of the holy city where Jesus reigns in all the subjects of his salvation. They are able to trust in no other refuge, and therefore they must love the truth which exalts Jesus as the only Savior of sinners. This is to them more than an empty theory; they know by experience that there is salvation in no other name but that Jesus who was manifested to take away our sins.—1 John iii. 5. Having no hope but in the truth of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, it necessarily follows that they must speak that truth which is their hope in every prayer for deliverance which rises in their hearts. They do not have to try to love this doctrine. The very principle of truth in which it is settled is that which rules in their hearts; so that they can no more fail to love the truth than they can live naturally without the air which furnishes the breath of life to them. Hence, in their whole walk and conversation the principle of obedience to the exhortation of our text is their guide. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the very life which animates them, and they alone are made to groan under the bondage of the law of sin in their members, which wars against the law of their mind, and prevents their doing the things which they would.—Rom. vii.

Even when the tried saints are led to doubt their interest in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, they do

not speak the truth in love, as they mourn their own sinfulness and want of conformity to the likeness of their Lord. The indwelling Spirit of Christ causes them to love his holy perfection, although they can see nothing in that holiness but condemnation for themselves. The whole experience of the saints speaks the same truth which is magnified in the work of Jesus as he destroyed death through the sacrifice of himself, and thus brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. When conferring with our own sinful mind we fail to receive the comforting assurance of the gospel of Christ, and at the dictation of unbelief we write bitter things against ourselves, we are not then "Speaking the truth in love." But when by the living and abiding power of faith we are enabled to claim all the rich and precious promises of the gospel as our inheritance in Christ Jesus, then we do realize the rich provisions of his grace in every appointment of his love concerning us. Then we can with Paul glory in tribulations also, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."—Romans v. 3-5. In thus speaking the truth in love the saints grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ. This growth is continually out of self-confidence, and leads them more clearly to see that in themselves dwells no good thing. In such growth reason sees nothing to sustain the hope of the trembling saint; but to the faith of Christ is revealed in this total loss of confidence in the flesh, the full manifestation of Christ in them the hope of glory. This hope is the seal of the Spirit, by which they are marked as heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. This assures their preservation through grace unto eternal glory. Since this is their certain heritage, well may they rejoice in "Speaking the truth in love."

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

At the commencement of the current volume we published a special rate to our subscribers at which they might procure and forward new subscribers until April 1st, 1888. Many have responded, and sent us in the aggregate several hundred new names; but owing to the extremely severe weather throughout a large portion of the country, many have written us that they have not been able to get around among the brethren. We have therefore decided to extend the time, and will until further notice receive subscriptions for new subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the

paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

These terms apply to none but those who are subscribers. Any one whose name is not on our list, and who wishes to take advantage of these rates, can send two dollars for his own subscription, and one dollar each for all other new subscribers.

#### LARGE HYMN BOOK FOR A DOLLAR, SIX FOR FOUR DOLLARS AND A HALF.

We have just had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

#### A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

We also have the small type book bound in cloth, which we will send post paid at price stated above. Cash must always accompany the orders. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

#### BACK NUMBERS.

OUR supply of back numbers being exhausted, we can no longer fill orders for them. We printed several hundred copies extra, but they have all been sent out, and new subscribers will now be commenced with the number at which their subscription is received, and dated a year from that time.

#### INFORMATION WANTED.

ANY one knowing the whereabouts of H. H. Ogier, will oblige me very much by writing to me. My post-office address is May, Garland Co., Arkansas.

MARY F. MONROE.

#### JUST RECEIVED.

WE have just received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### "THE EDITORIALS," FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

MARRIAGES.

On the morning of Wednesday, March 14, 1888, by Elder F. A. Chick, at his residence in Reisterstown, Md., Mr. Frank H. Zouck, of Glen Morris, Md., and Miss Alice A. Chick, eldest daughter of the officiating minister.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

My dear father, **Coleman Kidwell**, was born in Fairfax County, Va., Nov. 4, 1808, and died Feb. 13, 1887, aged seventy-nine years, three months and nine days. He was a son of James B. and Jemima Kidwell, and was the oldest of a family of twelve children.

Father and mother were married Dec. 14, 1832, near Leesburg, Loudoun Co., Va. Her maiden name was Emeline Sims. She was taken from us in the fall of 1848, leaving father with four of us little children, I being little more than eight years old, and next to the youngest. Father placed us among our relatives for two years, when he was married to Miss Mary I. Kearns, Dec. 19, 1850, who survives him; and while she feels deeply her sad bereavement, she knows that each of us own and cherish her as our mother; for she cared for us in our childhood and bore with all our childish ways.

Father in his younger days made a profession of religion and united with the New School order of Baptists some time between the dates of 1830 and 1840. I must not undertake to tell when and how a change came over father's mind. I can only rejoice to know that it was so. I must refer once to his hatred of the Old Baptists. Some years after I was sick he came to see me. Brother Kearns had just been received among the Old Baptists. He said, "Eli, you are my only son. You have been very sick. But I would rather follow you to your grave than hear of you doing as Dick [referring to brother Kearns] has done." Long after that he left the New School party, and would go to hear Elder Smoot whenever it was convenient; and when he and I were together alone, talking of the goodness and mercy of God, I called his attention to the words referred to above. I shall never forget that moment. He burst into tears and said, "Eli, I remember it as if it was only yesterday. But the things I once hated, now I love, and I can't tell how it has come about." By this time we were together, and fell on each other's neck and wept.

Father was stricken with paralysis a few months before he died, rallied a little, but not sufficiently to walk any without assistance. On the night of February 12th I received the sad intelligence that father was dying. Next morning I went to his home in Fairfax and found him deprived of all power of speech, hearing or notice of any one. The breath left his body little by little, and at last my father was no more.

Elder Wm. M. Smoot preached at the house from the chapter in the old family Bible wherein father had done his last reading and turned the leaf down, Psalm lxxiii. 1-7.

ALSO,

LITTLE upward of one year has passed away, and I am called to mourn the loss of another dear one, who wept with us, and was one of us when dear father fell asleep. Our youngest sister, **Mrs. Virginia A. Kearns**, beloved wife of David E. Kearns, departed this life March 14, 1888, aged twenty-four years, seven months and twenty-one days. Her sickness was of short duration. She died quite suddenly, with some symptoms of pneumonia, and seemed to choke to death. While it is so sad to think of, I feel a strong desire for that blessed spirit of resignation to the Lord that enables his saints to say, Thy will be done.

"Jennie," as we always called her, was born in Fairfax County, Va., June 21, 1863, and was married to David E. Kearns

on April 25, 1882. She was half-sister to me, and mother's only child, upon whom this falls with almost crushing weight, as she had lived with her since father's death. We loved her in her infancy, and cherished her as she grew up; but we could not keep her. The Lord has done what seemed him best. Our mother and the dear husband are sorely distressed, together with my oldest sister, who has seemed to have a parental care for her from infancy. She died in the same house where we all met one year ago to pay the last sad rites to our dear father. Dear brethren, how solemn to meet when all are crushed. May the Lord reconcile us to his holy will. Jennie has left us to mourn. She has left two little children, too young to realize how deep our sorrow is.

Elder W. M. Smoot was called to attend, and preached from Psalm lxxvii. 19. The preaching was to the point; for truly the way of the Lord with us is in the great deep, and his track can no man trace in the dispensations of his providence.

Your afflicted brother,  
ELI T. KIDWELL.  
OCOQUAN, Va.

**Elder Jehu Byrnside** departed this life Jan. 18, 1888. He was taken sick Sept. 1, 1887, with severe pain in his hip, and a general breaking down of his system, from which he suffered a great deal until death released him. I was with him a great deal while he was sick. He told me before he was taken that he could not live long. All was done for him that was in human power, but to no avail. We had to give him up.

Elder Byrnside was the oldest son of the late Benjamin and Cynthia Byrnside, of Boone County, now West Virginia. He was born Jan. 12, 1831, was married to Mary Ann Smith on March 10, 1853, joined the Old School Baptist Church at Upper Falls of Coal River, Kanawha Co., W. Va., and was baptized May 11, 1856, by the late Elder J. H. Sidebottom. He soon after joined Providence Church by letter, which church called for his ordination. He was ordained by Elders Wm. Martin and Wm. A. Melton, in 1862. A short time before his death he joined Hopewell Church by letter. He was an able preacher, a good disciplinarian, and was one of the best posted men on Baptist doctrine and order that I ever knew. He was a lover of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and you, brethren Beebe, have lost a true friend. Few men possessed more varied and useful gifts than he. He was pastor of Providence Church for a long time; and whether he was our pastor or not, he did a great deal of preaching for us, in connection with others who served us at intervals. Truly our loss is great; but we should not murmur at any of the works of our God, for he knows what is best for us. We truly sympathize with his companion, our sister, and his five children, who are left to mourn the loss of a kind husband and father. A short time before he died he said,

"On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,  
And cast a wishful eye  
To Canaan's fair and happy land,  
Where my possessions lie."

And the apostle Paul says, "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." But our brother did not have to wait long. The above were the last words he ever uttered.

Your unworthy brother,  
SILAS J. BIRD.  
BYRNSIDE, Putnam Co., W. Va.

DIED—On January 5, 1888, in Lawrenceburg, Anderson Co., Ky., **Edmund Burrus**, in the seventy-second year of his age.

Brother Burrus has been a member of the Baptist Church over fifty years; was baptized by Elder J. H. Walker in the fellowship of the church at Goshen. He remained there a few years, when he re-

moved to Missouri. After staying there several years he went to California. He remained in that state till 1881, when he came back to Kentucky, and was received by letter into the church at Goshen, and lived a most worthy member until called home. He was married to Mrs. Kate Cole, December 24, 1884. About a year before he died he was taken down with rheumatism, from which he suffered much, but bore it all with christian resignation. His disease finally became complicated, and he commenced to weaken, so that it seemed the time of his departure was near at hand. But he had no fears of death. About two weeks before he died he called brother James E. Paxton to his bed, who was about to leave, and talked to him, saying he was not afraid to die, and was reconciled to the will of God. He continued sinking until the evening of the fifth, when it was plainly to be seen that the grim monster, death, had taken hold on him; but it was no terror to him. His dear Savior had taken the sting of death away. O what a comfort to his near friends to leave such an evidence. I have known our dear brother from childhood, and can truly say of all his brothers and sisters, as touching their morality, they were truly a pattern, which is but seldom seen. But our dear brother was not only moral, but proved from his walk and conversation that he had been with Jesus. Brother Burrus was the last taken of the family. His mother and nearly all his brothers and sisters were Old School Baptists. He leaves a wife and step-daughter, with many relations and the church, to mourn; but we should not mourn as those without hope, fully believing our loss is his eternal gain.

As ever, your brother in hope,  
A. J. BICKERS.

DEATH's cold and icy hand has again called a loved one away from time. Our much beloved sister, **Helen Pelham**, widow of Joseph Pelham, died Feb. 2, 1888, at her home in Woodstock, Lenawee Co., Mich., aged seventy-four years. Her disease was complicated. She was for many years very feeble, and subject to violent attacks of lung and kidney disease, from which she suffered much. She had only one son, who has stood over his dear mother night and day for many years, doing all he could to relieve her pain. But all is over now, and he has no dear mother to welcome him home. But his loss is, I trust, her great gain.

Sister Pelham was born in Ireland, and in early life went to Delaware County, N. Y.; and moved to this state some thirty-four years ago. She united with the Old School Baptist Church of Columbia, Jackson Co., Mich., some twenty-five years ago, and was baptized by Elder Lewis Seitz, of Ohio. She was a firm and unwavering believer in salvation by grace alone. I visited her in her last moments, and she seemed resigned to the will of the Lord. A few moments before she breathed her last I was standing by her bedside. Her speech had failed her, and she tried to talk to me, her hand and eyes expressing what her tongue could not. I said, "Your hope is in heaven, is it not?" With extended hands she pointed upward. I feel that she is now where there are pleasures for evermore.

Elder Swartout was called to speak on the occasion.

"Servant of God, well done;  
Rest from thy loved employ;  
The battle fought, the victory won,  
Enter thy Master's joy."

"The pains of death are passed,  
Labor and sorrow cease;  
And life's long warfare closed at last,  
Rest in thy Savior's joy."

MRS. M. P. LEWIS.  
WOODSTOCK, Mich.

WITH sorrow we announce the death of **Mrs. Mary Quick**, one of our oldest and

most respected citizens, who died on Saturday morning, March 17, 1888, of chronic catarrh of the stomach, at the age of sixty-eight years. She was born in Orange County, N. Y., and at the age of fourteen years came with her parents to Chemung County, where she lived for many years, and was married in 1859. Her husband died, leaving her with two daughters to care for as only a mother can. Soon after this she moved to Waverly, where she has since resided, and leaves many near and dear friends and relatives to mourn her departure. The funeral services were held at the house on Tuesday, Elders M. Vail and D. H. Cooper officiating, and interment made in Dry Brook Cemetery.—*Waverly Free Press.*

THE maiden name of the deceased was Mary Corey, daughter of Nathan Corey. She was not a member of any church, but professed a hope many years ago. Her trust was alone in the work of Jesus. She said to me that if salvation was conditional she could have no hope; that it must be of grace, free and unmerited, to benefit her, a poor, helpless sinner. I was with her a few times while she was sick. She appeared very much reconciled to her affliction, and bore it with christian fortitude. Her greatest fear was that she was too anxious to go home. She said she had nothing to stay here for except her two daughters, who did all that kind and affectionate children could do for a mother. But as her days were numbered, her heavenly Father called her home.

"Methinks I see her now at rest  
In the bright mansion love ordained;  
Her head reclines on Jesus' breast,  
No more by sin or sorrow pained."

"Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,  
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh?  
When Jesus calls the saint must go:  
'Tis their eternal gain to die."

May the God of all grace, comfort, hope and salvation bless the mourning friends, especially the lonely, sorrowing daughters, who keenly feel the loss, with grace to help them in every time of need, is the desire of your unworthy friend and servant,  
M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

**D. B. White** was born Dec. 31, 1811, in the state of Tennessee, and died at the residence of his son-in-law, Wm. Post, Spearsville, La. He was a firm believer in the Primitive Baptist faith, although he had never united with the church. I was personally acquainted with him, and knew him to be consistent, believing in salvation by grace, and for many years had a hope through grace. His disease was of the bowels, which lasted but a few days. His daughter and son-in-law did all they could for him. He patiently suffered until it pleased the good Lord to release him and take him home to that heavenly peace and joy that knows no end. Thus on the second day of July, 1887, he ended his long pilgrimage, to receive the crown of life. His age was seventy-five years, six months and two days. He leaves one son and two daughters to mourn his absence; but we mourn not as those who have no hope, for we feel that our loss is his eternal gain. May it please the good Lord to reconcile us all to this sad but righteous dispensation of his will.

H. B. BRAZEAL.

SPEARVILLE, La.

My beloved wife, **M. A. B. Stilwell**, quietly passed away on February 5, 1888, of consumption. She was a firm believer in the doctrine contended for by the Old School Baptists. We quietly laid her away at the old Welsh Tract meeting-house, Iron Hill. She leaves six children, three boys and three girls.

Yours with respect,

JOHN STILWELL.

CHESTER, Pa.

## RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

Solomon Payne 2, Joseph Amis 2 50, J N Gibson 2 50, Eld F M McLeroy 6 75, J S Ownbey 2, W H Ledbetter 2, Mrs Nancy Hopper 2 50, Elder W H Gammon 2, Stephen Langford 2 50, B F Goins 2 — \$26 75.

## APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows:

At Mt. Sterling, Ky., Tuesday p. m., April 24.

At Mt. Carmel, Ky., Wednesday a. m., April 25.

At Mt. Gilead, Ky., Thursday a. m., 26.

At Mays Lick, Ky., Friday a. m., 27.

At Little Flock, Ky., Sunday a. m., 29.

At Georgetown, Ky., Tuesday a. m., May 1.

At Elk Lick, Ky., Wednesday a. m., May 2.

At Sardis, Ky., Friday a. m., May 4.

At Mill Creek, Ohio (near Cincinnati), Saturday and Sunday a. m., May 5, 6.

At New Castle, Ind. (as brother Coble may arrange), Monday night, May 7.

At Lebanon Ind. (near Elder J. A. Johnson's) Tuesday a. m., May 8.

At Greenfield, Ind. (and vicinity, as brethren may arrange), Wednesday and Thursday, May 9, 10.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa.

## ASSOCIATIONAL.

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (16th), 1888, and continue the two following days.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

Those attending the association who come by way of Baltimore will take the train for Cockeysville on the Northern Central R. R. from Calvert Station at 3.30 p. m. on Tuesday, or from Union Station five minutes later. The train reaches Cockeysville at 4.15, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming down the Northern Central R. R. will reach Cockeysville about 4.30, and will also be met and cared for. We hope to meet many of our brethren at that time.

F. A. CHICK.

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will hold her next annual session, if the Lord will, with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (23d), 1888, and continue until Friday evening following.

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 30th), 1888, and continue three days.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (6th), 1888, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

The Chemung Old School Baptist Association, will be held, if the Lord will, with the Charleston & Sullivan Church, in Tioga County, Pa., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (13th), 1888, and continue in session the two following days.

For the information of all who may wish to attend the Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon, for the year 1888, we will state that by an arrangement of the churches composing said association a change has been

made in the time of holding the same. Therefore the 35th annual meeting of said association will be held with the Siloam Church, at Harmony School House, some three miles northeast of Mt. Angel, in Marion County, Oregon, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1888, worship to begin at 11 o'clock a. m.

Those coming on the Narrow Gauge R. R. will be met by brethren at Mt. Angel station with teams to convey them to the place of meeting.

All Old School or Primitive Baptists are cordially invited to attend our association and join with us in the solemn worship of the Lord our God.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.

E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

## THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting of the Old School or Primitive Baptists held with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, Pa., to commence on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1888. A general invitation is given to any of our faith and order who may feel in their hearts to visit us, as we are destitute of ministers. Elder E. V. White, of Virginia, is serving us as pastor.

Those visiting us by railway will have to come on the Baltimore & Ohio Rail Road to Hancock, Md., on Thursday, where they will be met and conveyed to the place of the meeting, a distance of about twenty miles.

Those wishing to come will please write and give timely notice to Ahimaaaz Mellott, or Dennis Mellott, or Jacob F. Garland. The post office address of all the above brethren is Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa. AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with the Broad Run Church, Montgomery County, Md., commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in May. All persons coming on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. will be met at Barnesville station on Friday before. Trains leave Washington City about 8.30 a. m., and 4.30 and 5.30 p. m. The morning train is best to take, as it is six to eight miles from the depot to the residences of our brethren. We earnestly invite ministers, brethren and friends to come.

E. V. WHITE.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1888.

NO. 9.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

OCCOQUAN, Va., April, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In the SIGNS of March 15th, present volume, appears a second communication of Elder S. H. Durand upon the spiritual birth. In this communication Elder Durand refers to a conversation which I had with him at his home, in which reference was made to his article in the January 15th number, and my reply to the same in the number for March 1st. Elder Durand says, "In conversation we went over the ground occupied by me in that article; and upon my more fully explaining my views as therein expressed, and calling particular attention to some of the Scripture referred to in support of them, he [brother S.] found nothing to disapprove, but acknowledged the correctness of the doctrine maintained by me." I read the last clause of this quotation with surprise. Elder Durand has entirely misunderstood me in the conversation referred to. While agreeing with him in some things, as well in private conversation as in his published article, I had no thought that I had left the impression upon his mind that there was an agreement upon the doctrine underlying the christian warfare. I have not yet been able to see the correctness of his position upon this subject. If I had, I should feel it my duty to say so in a communication in the SIGNS *over my own signature*. In referring to my reply to his article of the January 15th number, Elder Durand says, "I looked earnestly to see what brother S. would say of my arguments, and especially of the Scripture that I had so carefully brought forward as teaching what I believed to be the truth. But to my surprise I did not find them alluded to; but through my inability to express myself in writing as clearly as I would like to, I found a misunderstanding of my position had led him to misstate it, and to ascribe to me a belief I have never had." If I did not allude to Elder Durand's arguments, and the Scripture quoted to sustain them, in my first communication, I have no expectation of doing so at any time. I do not consider it necessary to follow every turn in an argument, but to meet the vital question at issue. Some of the Scripture referred to by Elder Durand in his first article seemed to me to be irrelevant to the subject, and I did not care to extend my reply to an unnecessary length in noticing it;

nor am I yet conscious of having misstated Elder Durand's position. I am willing to leave all of this to the candid reader, avowing, however, that nothing could be further from my intention than to ascribe to him a belief that he does not hold. I wish now, in a calm, candid manner, to present a few Bible facts for the consideration of your readers, after which I do not propose at this time to further discuss the subject in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Two questions are involved in the discussion—the spiritual birth and the doctrine of election. They have heretofore been discussed by considering the birth first, and the election next. I prefer to discuss them by considering the election first, and the birth following. I have supposed that our brethren in the east, generally speaking, had refuted the idea of the election of a church existing merely in the purpose of God, but that we held the election of a church actually existing in Christ before the world began. Elder Durand acknowledges the existence of the church in an unfallen state. Was it an actual existence—an actual choice of a church actually existing? If so, is this the election of sinners of Adam's race? There cannot be an election merely in purpose. Election calls for the actual existence of the object elected at the time of its election. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 3, 4. Here we have a choice or election "before the foundation of the world." Was this a choice of something actually existing? If so, can this be sinners of Adam's race? To say yes to this, asserts the existence of Adamic sinners "before the foundation of the world;" in other words, the existence of the children before the creation of their Father. We say that we believe in eternal election. If so, the election must be in the heavenly, and not in the earthly, Adam. The "elect lady" must have existed in the Lord Jesus Christ before the world began. Then why speak of an election in the earthly Adam? To this agrees the inspired testimony, "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. i. 1. "For both he that

sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."—Hebrews ii. 11. Election here does not imply, as is frequently asserted, the taking of one and leaving of others. The whole church was elected at once in Christ before the world began. The Redeemer says, "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her."—Song vi. 9. I know that there is a revelation of this wonderful and glorious truth in the salvation of sinners, but of that I will speak hereafter. Adam is called "the figure of him that was to come."—Rom. v. 4. Were not the whole human family created in him? and did they not actually and personally exist in that creation before their development by a birth? Did not Levi have a personal existence in Abraham before his birth, and both of them have such a personal existence in Adam? What is true of these is true of us all. So in Christ the heavenly Adam existed all the chosen seed when he (Christ) was "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."—Proverbs viii. 23. This is eternal, unconditional and personal election; and this is the basis, cause or source of the "above" or "again birth" to which I wish now to come. I have stated that I understand Elder Durand's position to be that the Adamic man is born of God. Elder Durand says that "the sinner is born again." Is not the sinner the Adamic man? Is not the "again birth" a birth of the Spirit? If so, do we not have the Adamic or natural man born of the Spirit, or born of God? If this is not Elder Durand's position, I have not understood him. I am aware that Elder Durand draws a distinction between "being born again" and "born of God;" but can such a distinction be correctly drawn? If to be born of the flesh is one thing, to be born of God another, and to be born again yet another, then we have three births; but the Scripture speaks of but two. Much stress is also laid upon the idea that the phrase "born again," in the third chapter of John, necessarily implies that the man should have been born once before of the flesh. This order would have to be reversed to apply to John the Baptist. It would make the second birth in his case to be of the flesh.—See Luke i. 39-44. The Adamic or natural man, or sinner, if you prefer the expression, may be born again times without number, but in each

successive birth the production is a natural man. In fact, Adam has been passing through the process of being born again ever since the original creation, and so on to the end of time. "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."—Gen. v. 1, 2. There must be a pre-existent seed before a birth. The birth is the development of the personal life existing in the seed. The Adamic sinner could not be born of the Spirit, or rather be born again, because he had no existence in the spiritual or chosen seed, which is Christ. Let us now look for the man who sees the heavenly kingdom, noticing first the again birth by which he sees the kingdom of God. The Scriptures declare, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. The assertion is here distinctly made that to be born again is to be born of "incorruptible seed." As stated twice in the third chapter of John, "born from above." The man then "born again," or born "from above," must have had the again or above existence in the incorruptible seed. His personal existence was in the heavenly Adam. Not the natural man or Adamic sinner born of the Spirit, and by virtue of that life he, the natural man, sees the kingdom; but the above or heavenly man, the "new" or the "inward man," the man "born from above," is the man who sees the kingdom. The starting-point is from the spiritual, not from the natural. "Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."—Gal. iv. 26. Here is where the man comes from. This is the above existence. A personal existence in the eternal, spiritual life of the holy city which John saw "coming down from God out of heaven." And when I speak of a personal existence, I hope that what I have already said in reference to the earthly and heavenly Adam may be sufficient to explain my meaning. Levi was in the loins of Abraham before his birth. He was there in such a sense that when he was born it developed his own existence, and not that of some one else. Then did he not exist before his birth, in a personal identity? So the children of the living God existed in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ "before the foun-

dation of the world." Being born from above, or born again, the pre-existent life is developed in the birth of the child of God, revealing a spiritual capacity to see and rejoice in the heavenly kingdom. "But as many as have received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 12, 13. The psalmist declares the same truth, "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her."—Psalm lxxxvii. 1. In the light of this indisputable Scripture testimony, how can the assertion be made that "the sinner is born again?" As already stated, is not the sinner the Adamic man? Is not the again birth of incorruptible seed? Then how can the sinner be born of a life in which he has no seed existence? It is utterly impossible. I am also at as great a loss to understand how the sinner or natural man, if such a thing were possible, could be born of the Spirit and his nature remain unchanged. A natural man born of the Spirit, and yet remaining natural. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," the Savior positively declares. This language, if there was nothing further, must be obliterated from the record in which it is written before such a position can be sustained in that divine testimony. If the natural man or sinner is born again, he must be born of the Spirit, and therefore must be spiritual. If born again, he must be born of an incorruptible seed; therefore he (the sinner) cannot sin, because "he is born of God." Is not this the legitimate result of such reasoning? If a sinner is born of incorruptible seed, does not that seed remain in him, the sinner? If the again birth is an above birth, is it not a birth of God? Then if the sinner is born again, is he not born of God, and therefore the one spoken of in the Scripture, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God?"—1 John iii. 9. Elder Durand asks, "To whom does the word 'ye' refer in the Savior's declaration, 'Ye must be born again?' What or who is the antecedent of that pronoun?" The New Testament record begins as follows, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Is not this a spiritual generation, and is it not developed by a spiritual birth? Some have supposed that we believe in the existence of a family of eternal spirits in heaven as men and women. This is not the doctrine. Keep in view the figure through which we see the substance. Were not the whole human family in Adam before their personal development by a birth? So we see in Christ the spiritual head all the members of his body. This is the generation of Jesus Christ. They "bear the image of the heavenly." But they are revealed to us in the Scripture also as bearing "the

image of the earthy." We can speak of them in their spiritual or in their earthly standing. In the development of this chosen generation to which attention is called in the first chapter of Matthew, we see them in their earthly standing as the sons of men, to whom are given earthly names, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and so on. Christ himself is called the son of David, and yet he is David's Lord. The children are partakers of flesh and blood. We cannot explain this wonderful mystery, yet it is the truth of God. Paul refers to his own experience of it in the language, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless *I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*"—Gal. ii. 20. Thus we can speak of them in their natural or in their spiritual standing. Abraham was a son of Adam, it is true; but he was more—he was a son of God. We can speak of him in either relation; so with Nicodemus. The Savior said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." Elder Durand asks who is the antecedent of the "ye" in this text. I answer, Who is the antecedent of the "ye" in the text, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation?" Who are they who are begotten "again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," but the children of the regeneration? Elder Durand also asks the question, "Does not Paul give as a reason why none can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, that Christ died for them, and God has justified them? Does not this teach, with many other Scriptures to which I before called attention, that Christ died for the elect?" Of this there can be no doubt. I can heartily repeat that he died "for the elect family of God." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 14, 15. Here we have the whole mystery of redemption. The children in their eternal, spiritual standing in Christ needed no redemption, for in that standing they had not sinned. Were these elect children but flesh and blood, or simply of an Adamic seed, the death of the Redeemer would not benefit them, because of the absence of that eternal relationship between him and them upon which redemption rests. But "both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are *all of one*: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them *brethren.*"—Hebrews ii. 11. Here then is an eternal, vital relationship between the children and their Redeemer; and as they "are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," that he might deliver them from the bondage of death. They are vitally united to him their living head in such a relationship that when "one died for all, then were all dead:

and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."—2 Cor. v. 14, 15. They were one with him in the tomb, one when he rose, and were forever justified in an "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." Here certainly is salvation, and salvation for sinners, for truly none others need salvation. Who now "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."—Romans viii. 33, 34. The glorious mystery of redemption is made manifest in the experience of lost and helpless sinners, exalting the dear Redeemer, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." It is through a knowledge of utter helplessness in their earthly head that the redeemed are brought to rejoice in him who is their life, their everlasting all. He is revealed in their salvation, and they "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." But in this tabernacle they do "groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."—2 Cor. v. 4. "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."—Rom. viii. 23. We know that gospel truth is known only by revelation; that it is the "revelation of Jesus Christ." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant."—Psalm xxv. 14. The brightest intellectual power, and the clearest earthly reasoning, are of no avail in a revelation of this character. It falls from the throne in holy instruction and comfort, "as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds."

"His gospel is the open sky,  
His love the shining sun."

How utterly unable we are, in and of ourselves, to open the gospel heavens. A cloud is about the throne, and the sacred page reveals no hope. The inquiring one must go beyond the watchmen upon Zion's walls. Look away from all earthly help, and look to the throne. "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ."—Rom. xvi. 25. He alone can open the way and lead us to the crystal river of eternal Truth. But when he is pleased to open our understanding that we may understand the Scriptures, how precious and wonderful the truth becomes. There is an eternal consistency in the way of salvation—in the revelation of "Christ in us the hope of glory." The heavens are now opened, and we see "visions of God." The heavenly doctrine drops as the rain, his speech distills "as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Bright and clear, in its wonderful and glorious height,

in its vast and unsearchable depth, in its comfort and consolation to the weary, waiting one. It is the "truth of the gospel" of the grace of God. "Crushed to the earth, it shall rise again."

I have endeavored, in some respects, to more fully state my position upon the subjects discussed, and also the position that I am opposing, sincerely hoping and believing that what I have written will be subjected to the scriptural test. As I have already stated, this is the only infallible standard. Truth is what we need. It is the pearl of great price. I have not in this communication gone over some of the ground occupied in our former articles. These communications are already before the readers of the SIGNS. May the Lord guide us in wisdom's path. May his children be clothed with humility, contending earnestly "for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." I will request that some attention be paid to the scriptural quotations which I have made in any answer to my communications, and the arguments which to my mind they sustain, and kindly ask for the Scripture, "Except a sinner be born again." I have no desire to engage in an unprofitable controversy; and, as already remarked, I do not expect, at least for the present, to write again upon the subject. I am glad to know that the "truth of the gospel" of the grace of God does not depend upon an earthly arm for support.

"Eternal Truth forever stands secure;  
Its head is guarded, as its base is sure.  
Fixed in the rolling flood of passing years,  
The pillar of the eternal way appears;  
The raining storm and dashing wave defies,  
Built by the Architect who built the skies."

Dear and beloved brethren, with able and faithful ministers, may pass away, generations roll into the oblivion of a never-recurring past, but the Word of our God endureth forever. "And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you." We confidently rest in this assurance, knowing that what our God has promised he is able to perform, and that when mortality is "swallowed up of life" we shall dwell forever in his presence, our unending rest undisturbed by mortal woe. Trouble and conflict shall be forever banished, and in immortal glory we shall see as we are seen. In this fervent hope I remain, as ever, yours to serve in bonds of gospel grace,

WM. M. SMOOT.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., April 11, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The time of our annual spring associations is drawing near, and I suppose that many hearts are looking forward to those meetings with high anticipations of profit and pleasure. It is but natural to think that this is so; for believers in Jesus, when love is in lively exercise, always delight to meet one another, and interchange words of good cheer, of pleasure, of comfort, or of sympathy, as the case

may be. The place of worship, where souls commune with God, and sit together in mutual fellowship and spiritual enjoyment, possesses many attractions for the spiritual mind.

"There friend holds fellowship with friend,  
And love and hope and pleasure blend."  
This is true of all the meetings of the people of God. We realize all this very often in our ordinary everyday gatherings in our regular church meetings, and can say, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." That the full benefit of such meeting and dwelling together may be realized, the apostle has exhorted us, saying that we should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, and also that we should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The design, when saints assemble, is not to dispute or discuss debatable questions, but that they should join in worship of the "one God," and in the name of Jesus pray to him, and praise him, and seek to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

The people of God have felt the need of meeting together in all ages, and God himself has recognized their need in this matter, and from the very beginning has made provision for it. The public worship of God in the general assemblies of the faithful was ordained from the beginning. The worship which is in spirit and in truth is from the heart and in the heart, and with this God is well pleased; yet still he has given us the privilege of expressing "the heart's adoration" by the voice of singing and prayer, and has appointed public gatherings and public preaching and exhortation for the encouragement and animating of our souls when we feel ready to faint and fall. Under both the patriarchal and legal dispensations God commanded such gatherings in his name, and sanctioned and sanctified them by manifesting his presence and his glory in their midst. In the temple and synagogue worship we see this purpose of God carried out; and God dwelt in his temple, and by Urim and Thummim met his people when they came to him. So when the old had passed away, and the new had been established, there still was continued to believers, disciples of Jesus, this duty and privilege of meeting together in the name of the Lord.

The times, the places, the occasions, the frequency of these gatherings together, are left to the spiritual judgment of the enlightened and renewed people of God. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," is the command; and in the first of Acts we see that the early church continued together day after day, breaking bread and praising God. One thing at least it is safe to say, that where the love of God abounds, those who possess it will greatly desire the assemblies of Zion, and will not be satisfied with seeking to meet only as often as they must. They,

on the other hand, will want to assemble as often as they can. They will not say, "It is amply sufficient if we meet once a month;" but will feel that even weeks and days are too long that keep them apart from their brethren. I have never seen any "reasonable reason" why so many of our churches meet but one Sunday in a month. If we love the courts of the Lord's house as our Father's house, will we not count the months long, and use every endeavor to get there oftener? If we are right in our spiritual experience, and our love is warm, we shall hail the time when we can meet, and shall most surely strive to make places and multiply occasions for so doing. There may be circumstances under which it is impossible to meet more than once a month, but they in our day and land are few; and if not impossible, what excuse have we if we do not meet? If we bring the real excuse, it will be our lukewarmness, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. And what shall we say of those who profess to hear the Lord and to obey his voice, who, when these privileges are at their very hand, and their brethren meet for worship every Sunday or oftener almost at their own door, yet for trivial excuses absent themselves? How much, or rather how little, love do they show for the cause of God and truth! If the prospect of a half-day's gossip about the petty affairs of our neighbors or ourselves will draw all the neighborhood together at any time, surely the prospect of hearing about our King and his grace and glory, or of having the privilege of speaking to others about him, ought at least to attract us as much and as often.

The excuse that no preacher of the gospel can be obtained more than once a month is of no account as an excuse. Preaching is one important ordinance in God's house, but it is not the "only one by any means. Meetings of the church where no preaching is mentioned in the New Testament are as frequently named as where preaching was held. "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation," &c. By what authority do we ignore and lay aside all these gifts in favor of preaching? By no means let us make light of preaching, but let us beware how we disregard all these other gifts. The very feeblest can have a part in this worship. If one cannot interpret, he may have a word of comfort, of exhortation. If he cannot speak at all, he may bring a psalm or hymn that has been or is being blessed to his soul. Jesus can cause that the few barley loaves and small fishes which a little lad has shall feed a multitude to repletion. Brethren, do we believe this? Then let us show our faith by our works. Let the little lad bring forth his small store. Who knows what a blessing Jesus will make of it. I was told once of a

young man in the state of Georgia who had but just been baptized, when one night his pastor called on him to pray. He had never been called on before, and it was a surprise; but he knelt down, and in the hush his brethren heard him just say, "O Lord, thou knowest that I do not know how to pray. Teach me." It was all he said; but those few words, uttered in weakness and humble-mindedness, hundreds of miles away and years ago, have done me good many a time as I have thought them over. Brethren, bring all the tithes into the storehouse, and see if God will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room to contain it.

But I wanted to write about our associational gatherings together in the name of Jesus. It has seemed to me that they grew up out of this very desire to meet for the worship of God and mutual comfort and edification that has established all the meetings of the churches, either stated meetings or transient ones. It is very easy to be seen that brethren of different churches would desire to hear from each other sometimes, and to join in mutual worship. They would also desire to keep up some mutual correspondence for comfort and encouragement in the way. They would also desire to confer together in times of trial or persecution, or for mutual advantage or instruction in the word. It would not of course be possible for whole churches to journey from place to place to see each other, to confer or to worship together; and so messages of mutual fellowship, containing statements of their affairs, would be sent by messengers, either by letter or by word of mouth. Now, this is in substance just what associations are to-day in design and in practice. This is good and profitable; and to this they should be limited. They are not lords over the churches. They cannot legislate for the churches. God has conferred no right upon the churches to delegate any power to one or two of their members for any purpose whatever. They can simply confer together by letters and messengers. One church may be represented by twenty of her members, and another by but one; it makes no difference. It ought to make no difference how many come to the annual meeting from the churches. As the purpose is simply to hear from each other and worship God, the church from whom twenty members have come cannot override the church which sends but one. If the association were a legislative body, then the delegates would have to be parcelled out by rule; but she is not a legislative body. The churches are still supreme at home. A body of brethren and sisters met in an annual association have no more authority to dictate for the churches than the same brethren would have if met upon any other occasion. Each member should feel it a blessed privilege that he can

meet his brethren from different quarters and join in worship with them; and hear and tell of the welfare of Zion in their several churches.

It is well to keep this in mind, for there is a tendency in all men and in all gatherings of men to usurp power over others. The little foxes creep in. They are so small as to seem almost harmless; but they have a tendency to a very rapid growth, and soon will not only devour the grapes, but the very vine itself will be destroyed. Let it be remembered that anything said or done by messengers at associations is but the expression of their own personal judgment, just the same as it would be if they were thus speaking or acting in a church meeting at home. What that messenger may say or do at an association cannot in any way bind the church whose messenger he is. In fact, what he may say or do at an association might not be the judgment of any of his brethren at home. If any advice is asked and given, it is no more valuable and no more binding than the advice which any of us might give to another through the SIGNS or in any other way. The association is simply and alone a body of brethren, met together at an agreed place to bear and receive messages from churches to churches, telling of each other's welfare. Anything beyond this is without Bible authority, and should not be tolerated for a moment. I as a messenger to any association have no right to take any action there except to state what my church has done or wishes done. It seems to me that if this could always have been borne in mind, much trouble and jarring and confusion at associations would have been avoided. The church is the place where God has set up his judgment throne; and when this is borne in mind, with all that it involves and implies, there will be no attempt on the part of associations to assume to judge. Judgment in all cases is in the church. It is the church that creates and can drop correspondence with another, and the church alone. The church is in existence always, whether met together or not. The association is only a band of brethren met this year or met next year, and when not met does not exist as a body. Every year the churches must provide for this meeting, or else there would be no association; and it might be that the churches would judge it best not to send messengers in any given year, and so there would be no association. This the churches have a perfect right to do, or not to do. If associations be allowed the least legislation or dictatorial power, then logically there is no escape from the conclusion that they are lords and not servants of the churches. It seems very evident to me that the churches themselves make a great mistake and sin against God when they seek to bring their difficulties or their business in any way to an association for settlement. God will give his churches wisdom if they ask

of him, but he has not told us to ask of associations. Our spring associations are near at hand; and so I wish to say that I have not written thus because I anticipate any special troubles of the sort named, but because at all times I think there is danger that we should guard against.

In looking forward to what I trust may prove to be pleasant and spiritual meetings, let us remember that the object of our gathering is not for debate or strife or discussion. All these things are easy to drift into at any time, but they are profitless to the spiritual mind, and very often furnish occasion for strife and anger and wrath and malice. We do not meet either to spend the time in foolish talking or jesting, in telling jokes or uttering sharp sayings, in talking politics or business. We do not meet to backbite or slander or discuss the faults of absent brethren; nor do we meet to tell what opposers of truth are doing or not doing. If these things, any or all of them, are our motive in coming together, better, far better, that we should not meet at all. No; our object is none of these things, but that we may enjoy sweet fellowship together, and encourage one another by hearing from each other, and by together engaging in the worship of God. May those who preach and those who hear be alike filled with the desire to strive together for the faith of the gospel; and may no jealousies or envies or heart-burnings appear nor have place, not even so much as in our hearts, but all be filled with mutual love, coupled with an earnest desire for the welfare of each other and the glory of God.

In conclusion, I desire to express my appreciation of the general course of the SIGNS during the past few years, and particularly of late. Its matter, editorially and otherwise, has been very rich with gospel truth and gospel experience. If there have been things that I have not approved (and there have been now and then), they did not in my view detract from the general excellence; and I do not expect perfection in the editors and writers for the SIGNS any more than in myself. So long as the SIGNS pursues its present course I shall stand by it, and give it what support I may. I have been reading the SIGNS with, I trust, a personal interest ever since I was ten years of age, or about thirty-three years; and I believe to-day what the SIGNS has always contended for, and what I have never ceased to believe since I was ten years of age. Much I did not then understand, and much, it is equally true, I do not understand now; but the faith which I hold is and has been my joy. The SIGNS has contended for that faith from the beginning. Sometimes articles have appeared discussing new subjects that I could not receive at all; but even there I did not lose fellowship for the writers, so long as they taught that sinners are saved by grace.

I have been deeply interested in

reading two new books recently, and feel like commending them to the brotherhood. I refer to the volume of letters by sister Mary Parker, and Elder Bartley's book on the resurrection. Sister Parker's letters were evidently written out of the depths, and are truly touched with the Spirit of him who abides with his people there. Surely no spiritual mind can read the book and not feel that here is rich experience of the power, wisdom and love of God. I finished its perusal saying, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which shall be given to them that love him? For their own comfort, as well as for the sake of our afflicted but patient sister, I hope that many brethren will buy and read this little book.

Elder Bartley's book does not strive to pierce the great mystery of the resurrection, but simply calls up in array and presents what the Scriptures teach concerning it, in connection with the whole scheme of redemption. To me one of the highest excellencies of the book is that it presents no novel or startling views, but simply lays in order before us the Bible doctrine of the resurrection, and leaves it there. Many things in it strengthened my hope and filled me with delight in our glorious Lord. I was solemnized and awed as I read of the wonderful mystery of God and of Christ, who is our resurrection and our life. I do not know that I dissent from our brother in any important thing, and hardly so even in the use he makes of any Scripture. The style of the book was one long delight to me, and the matter a comfort and rejoicing. I trust that God may make it a source of comfort to all who read it, and fill with comfort the heart of its author.

As many have written to me inquiring kindly after Mrs. Chick's health, I desire to say in this way to them that she is still very feeble, and gains, if at all, very slowly; yet she is relieved from the terrible suffering of the winter. For this we desire to feel grateful to God.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of eternal life,

F. A. CHICK.

STATE ROAD, Del., April, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I will offer for the consideration of your readers some reflections on First Peter i. 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience." It is no part of my object now in discoursing upon this sentence to define the terms "elect," "foreknowledge" and "sanctification," in order to show their relation to each other or the distinction between them, beyond what seems to be necessary in pointing out and dealing with the persons characterized as elect. These different terms are all brought to view here as expressing a purpose or work of Jehovah in regard to the children of men, that has come in a blessed fulfillment

to these scattered brethren to whom he is writing. They are elect. Those who are subjects of election are themselves about the best exposition of what the election of God is, as living examples of it, that we shall ever be likely to obtain. In them we both see its effects and can trace it to its source. If we understand this election as unto life, called from a state of death in sin by the voice of the Son of God unto life, all the developments of this life are known to him who hath thus called them, and who is the author and source of it. Whatever the sorrow and burden of mind, sense of condemnation and mourning in desolation on account of sin, it is all foreknown to God, because it is a work that he hath himself wrought. When out of deep distress they cry unto him, he knows what they have need of before they ask. In all their hungering and thirsting, wandering in the wilderness, crying for bread, and almost despairing of hope, it is all in perfect accord with the foreknowledge of God, just what the work of the Spirit of God always produces. It is certainly not strange that God should foreknow the fruits and effects of the work of his own Spirit. They are always in harmony and perfect accord with his foreknowledge of them. This manifestation of the elect in the effects and fruits of that election is further said to be "through sanctification of the Spirit." Sanctification under the law was a ceremonial purification and setting apart as sacred and holy to sacred and holy uses. It was frequently accomplished by the sprinkling of blood upon the defiled or impure. The application of the blood of the everlasting covenant applied by the holy Spirit of God to the conscience more effectually sanctifieth, purging our conscience from dead works to serve the living God; but the end and result of this sanctification of the Spirit, in making manifest the Lord's people in a spirit of child-like obedience to his revealed will, is what I have mainly in view. If obedience to the divine will results always and invariably from this sanctifying work of the Spirit of God, we do well to examine it thoroughly, and to examine our own hearts also, that we may if possible trace its existence there. Obedience to the will of a heart-searching God is certainly that which is prompted by an obedient spirit. The mere performance with our hands of things in which the heart has no part, prompted perhaps by some selfish motive, amounts to little with him with whom we have to do. To those who in all they do know only the spirit of a servant, and who work for reward, I shall hardly be able to show the spirit of filial obedience in the child; but to those who are no more servants, but sons, it will readily appear that the obedience of sons and daughters is prompted by another and an entirely different spirit. This spirit results from the relationship, and is inseparably connected with it. It is before

all acts of obedience, as they all result from it. It is a meek, humble, inquiring spirit, inquiring what the Lord would have them to do, and desiring to honor and glorify him, and is in the sight of God of great price. The Lord in giving knowledge of salvation to his people, gives a love to that salvation. It is as a Savior that they love him. The things that accompany salvation are bestowed upon us for our profit and furtherance in the divine life, a loving Father providing for his children. It is in proof of our love to him that we love the things unto which he calls his people. If we love him we will find ourselves drawn toward his worship, his people, and the order of his house. He not only admonishes us if we love him to keep his commandments, but he says, "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments." David never got to build the temple of the Lord, but the prophet told him that "it was well that it was in thine heart." It was accounted unto him the same as though he had succeeded in building it. So the prophet Isaiah identifies those that follow after righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law. Those who thus obey from the heart obey not alone the word of the Lord as he speaks from his high throne, or even as he speaks in the Scriptures; but they find a voice speaking in their own heart and in their own wants that calls for obedience. "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord;" "when shall I come and appear before God?" The psalmist describes the blessedness of the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in his commandments. It is not the doing of them, but the delighting in them, that is the important point. The commandments of God are not merely christian duties or church ordinances; they mean and embrace all his truth. The prophet Isaiah called for the gates to be opened, "that the righteous nation that keepeth the truth may enter in." It was in the prophet's wonderful vision of gospel times that the people should come to the church like doves to their windows.

If the word of the Lord has no place in our hearts, it may well be questioned whether we really keep it, however well we may observe it outwardly. It may sound hard to some to say that the most zealous performance of works and duties, all right in themselves, is not obedience to God, unless prompted by an obedient spirit; and yet what comfort or profit is there to one's own self in doing works and duties in which the heart has no part? This spirit of obedience does not prevent the flesh from being weak. Indeed, it belongs to the spirit of a child to be weak and timid, distrusting one's self. There would be no blessedness to ourselves in obeying if we were not obeying the voice of our own conscience at the same time that we obeyed the word of the Lord. There would no relief

or peace of conscience result from an act of obedience if the spirit of obedience had not prompted the act. A burden must be upon the mind first, or no burden could be removed. This spirit of obedience to Christ does not exist in depraved nature. It springs from that relationship to him of which it is only a development. There is obedience sometimes in simply waiting; waiting upon the Lord, and waiting for the making known of his will concerning us. King Saul at one time became so impatient because the priest and prophet delayed so long to offer sacrifice to the Lord, that he went about it himself and offered the sacrifice. The prophet told him that he had done very foolishly. Waiting in this case would have been obedience. Another time he took hold of a grand scheme in the way of sacrifice to the Lord that might to some appear very meritorious. It was to take all the best cattle and sheep of the Amalekites, and have Israel offer them in sacrifice instead of taking their own. This was not obedience. It was characterized as even worse than disobedience. It was rebellion, and was as the sin of witchcraft. There may sometimes be obstacles in the way for a long time, while there is all the while a willing spirit. There will in such cases be, at times at least, a sense of disobedience and of neglected duty. In answer to the dictates of conscience and compliance with the word, the obedient child finds peace. There is an end of worrying and of temptation, and the weary, heavy laden soul finds rest. The Lord Jesus has given the peace which no power can take away. If the word was not to us, and we did not feel it so, we would have nothing to obey; we would not answer our conscience in anything we did. I trust I know that the flesh is weak, that Satan hinders, and that there are many adversaries. Happy shall he or she be that can have it to say that they were not disobedient to the heavenly vision, and that they did not confer with flesh and blood. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things. I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

I have written the above by request of one who seems to be inquiring for the feeding places and resting places of the flock. It is at your disposal.

Yours to serve in the gospel,  
E. RITTENHOUSE.

GRIFFIN'S CORNERS, N. Y., March 9, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish the following experience of sister Cross, when space will permit. To me it has the right sound, ascribing all glory to God.

Your brother in hope,  
D. EARL.

BARNERVILLE, N. Y., Jan. 19, 1888.

ELDER DAVID EARL—BELOVED BROTHER:—I have had a great desire of late to write to you, and try and tell you the way in which I hum-

bly hope and trust the Lord has seen fit in his infinite love and wisdom to lead about and instruct a poor, unworthy worm of the dust, such as I feel myself to be. It is with much fear and trembling, and a sensible realization of my utter nothingness and unworthiness, that I now attempt to comply with what I humbly trust is the leading of the Holy Spirit. The desire has been with me almost constantly since your visit at our house. That was a blessed season for me, and a great privilege to have the pleasure of entertaining you, for which I have been constrained many times since to pour out my heart in thankfulness and praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. I have been made to cry many times, O Lord, teach me thy will. It is with this desire, the desire to do his will in all things, that I now attempt to tell you in my stammering way what I trust the dear Lord has seen fit to reveal to me, the least of all saints, if one at all.

I was born November 27th, 1858, at Jewett Centre, Greene County, New York. My parents were members of the Old School Baptist Church at Lexington, and our house was always a home for the Old School Baptists. As far back as I can remember I had a great dread of death and the judgment; and I have wept many times in secret at the thought of myself or friends dying and being put into the cold ground. I remember once in particular, just at twilight, before my mother had lighted the lamp, I was lying before the fire, thinking of death, and the thought came, Can it be possible, as dearly as I love my father and mother, that they have got to die and be put out of my sight forever? Then I wondered which would die first, and which I could spare the better; but I could not decide, as they were both so very dear to me. I wept bitterly, as the thought seemed so terrible to me; but when the lamp was lighted I kept my face turned away from the light, until I thought all traces of my tears were gone, as I thought they would question me as to the cause of my tears, and I would be ashamed to tell them my thoughts. I remember hearing some of my older sisters sing,

"The judgment day will surely come;  
What will we do that day?  
Turn, sinners, turn."

I somehow had an indescribable feeling that it would be a dreadful day for me, as I was so very naughty the most of the time. At such times I would resolve to try and be better, and would think, Now I will begin to-day, and will not speak an unkind word to one of my brothers or sisters, nor get angry; but it did seem as if I ever acted willfully it was at such times. The next circumstance that I remember was in the summer before I was six years old. My brother next older than I was very sick with a fever-sore on his leg, and there were times when the doctor hardly thought he would recover. At the

same time an aunt, my father's sister, was sick with consumption. Now, as I loved both, and felt it would be hard to part with either, I concluded that I would pray to God to spare them. Accordingly I went up above the house, just out of sight, and after looking around, to be sure that no one would see me, I knelt down by a spring, and for the first time attempted to pray. I do not remember the words I used, but I arose from my knees with this feeling, Now I will see if my prayer will be answered. Time passed, and my brother slowly recovered; but the Lord saw fit to remove my aunt, which caused me to wonder in my childish way why this was, that only a part of my prayer was answered. My parents attended the funeral, taking me with them. When we reached the grave we found one of my sisters there, and she wished to ride home. Our parents readily consented, and stopped to take her in; but I said she might just as well walk, as there was not room, and she would crowd me. My parents reproved me for my selfishness, and the next moment I felt ashamed and sorry that I was such a bad, wicked girl; and for the first time in my short life I knew what it was to feel truly wretched.

In the spring of 1866 my father sold his farm in Jewett, and moved with his family to Washington, Macomb County, Michigan. The Methodists were holding a Sunday School at Washington, a small village about a mile from our home. I felt very anxious to attend, but my father would not consent at first, until I heard my brother tell him one day, "Let her go; it will not hurt her." So my sister Mary and I attended regularly, and I was delighted with it. They had a library of books, and every Sunday I brought home a book to read during the week. One thing I noticed; the little girls and boys I read about were so much better than I could be. I would have serious thoughts, and make good resolutions, which I always broke. Then I would grow careless and indifferent, and scarcely think of these things for a long time; but then I did have hope that I might in time be as good as they. With this in view, I always knelt before my seat when the superintendent prayed before opening the school. One Sunday, while he was addressing the school, he admonished us to do right, telling us we would be happier, and requesting all to raise their hand who were going to try the coming week to do right, and come the following Sunday prepared to tell him whether they felt happy or not in so doing. I felt glad of the opportunity of promising publicly to be good; so I, with the rest, quickly raised my hand in token of my willingness to try. But, alas! it seemed to me that I did not do one good act the whole week. It seemed that my parents were obliged to reprove me more than commonly for disobedience. Well, I attended the next Sunday, rather dreading the ques-

tion that I knew was coming. All were requested to raise their hand that had succeeded in being good, and felt happier by so doing. I had intended to raise my hand with the rest, until the thought came to me that I might deceive the school, but I could not deceive God. I was glad it was not discovered that I was the only one that had failed, proving that I was worse than the rest. I heard some one remark that they thought in time that that part of Michigan where we lived would sink and become a lake, as there seemed to be water beneath us. O how it frightened me, for I thought, I am so wicked, I am not fit to die. I was so troubled that I would dream we were about to sink, and would be terribly frightened; and when I would awake and find it a dream, how thankful I would be that I could be spared a little longer. We lived in Michigan one year and a half. In the fall of 1867 we moved back to South Jewett, Greene County, New York, two miles from our old home, and lived in the home of my oldest sister until spring, when we moved to Gay Head, Greene County, New York, where my father rented a farm for one year. On the first of November, 1867, previous to our moving back from Michigan, death entered our family and took from our number a dear brother, the pride of the family. It was a hard blow to us, especially to my dear mother, who was then in feeble health, our family circle being broken for the first time. I felt greatly relieved to escape the terrible death which I feared would overtake us should we remain in Michigan. I had no more trials in regard to my condition for about a year; then my old troubles returned. I would feel so wretched at times, feeling that I was too wicked to die, and yet feeling that when my time came I would surely have to go, whether I was prepared or not. I would search out all the deaths published in the SIGNS of children of my age, and wonder, What if it had been me? I thought surely hell would be my portion were I taken then. Then I would cry from my inmost soul to God to spare me yet a little longer, until I could become better prepared, which I always hoped would be the case at some time in the future. About this time I had dreams of the world being on fire, and would be in terrible agony of mind, so much so that I would always awake before I was destroyed; and as soon as I could realize that it was only a dream, I would exclaim, "Thank God, it is not true." My father was always a great hand to take his hymn book, and sing for an hour or so; and I well remember the happy expression that would be on his face, and on my mother's, as he sang. I always enjoyed hearing him sing, as I was very fond of music; but I could not understand the meaning of the words, until one time he sang,

"Broad is the road that leads to death,  
And thousands walk together there;

But wisdom shows a narrow path,  
With here and there a traveler."

O how wretched I would feel every time he sang it, for I felt that I was on that broad road to death and destruction; but somehow I felt that my parents were safely on the narrow path, and O how I did long to be there too. In the fall of 1868 a friend from Michigan came to make us a visit, and while he was there he sang a piece that he had heard sung at a protracted meeting. I do not remember the first part of the piece, but the latter part so fastened itself on my memory that I have never forgotten it. It was an account of a worldly minded young lady that loved to dress in the height of fashion, and would not listen to the admonitions of her christian parents not to attend balls and parties, but to embrace religion while there was an opportunity. She turned a deaf ear to their entreaties, saying there would be time enough when she was old. But, alas! she was taken suddenly sick and died. I thought, What a terrible fate! I should strive to escape such a doom; for I felt that it was in my power to get religion if I only went to work right. I thought perhaps when I got older I would know better how; but poor Polly's fate haunted me for many a day. My dear mother was gradually failing, having the dropsy, and finally, on January 23d, 1869, she fell asleep in Jesus, as I have reason to hope. My grief was loud and uncontrollable, for I thought, Who will I go to now when I am sick or in trouble? I looked in wonder at my father, as he seemed so calm and reconciled. I never heard him murmur. I came to the conclusion that he must be very hard-hearted not to show any more sorrow; but now I know that I did not feel the presence of the blessed Redeemer, as he no doubt did, to cheer and comfort me. That night, as I was on my bed weeping, thinking what a sufferer my mother had been, and yet thinking how dreadful it was to die, these words came to me with a great deal of comfort,

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are," &c.

I soon fell asleep, feeling much comforted. I was then ten years old.

I will now pass over a period of three years, in which time I lived a careless and happy life. Being naturally of a cheerful and lively disposition, my spirits at times would run pretty high. In the summer of 1872 I retired one Sunday night, feeling happy and secure. I was awakened in the night by a terrible crash of thunder, the beginning of the worst thunder storm I have ever witnessed. No doubt many still remember the time. Certainly, if they had suffered the tortures of a guilty conscience as I did, added to the fear of bodily suffering, it would have been imprinted on their memories indelibly. I shook like an aspen leaf, and with the tears streaming down my cheeks (thinking it was the end of time) I begged and pleaded for God to have

mercy on me, to forgive me my sins before I died, or in mercy spare the world, and not destroy it, and give me a chance to lead a better life, which I promised him solemnly I would do if I was spared. But it seemed to me that I was praying to an angry and indignant God, who answered me in peals of thunder and flashes of lightning, which were growing louder and more terrific every moment. I wept until I was exhausted, and could weep no more. Then I arose and went to the door that led to my father's sleeping-room, and trembling in every limb, I laid like a poor, condemned criminal in front of the closed door, feeling a little safer in being near him. After a time it subsided, the thunder growing more distant, and finally I crept quietly back to bed, resolved to lead a better life if I was spared until morning. Accordingly I secured a Testament and concealed it in my sleeping-room, resolved upon being very devoted to the cause that I had espoused; and I did for a long time read a chapter every night, and knelt down and tried to pray. I was quite well satisfied with my efforts, and thought the Lord must be better satisfied with me than he had been in the past. Time passed, and one night I knelt as usual to pray, when it seemed that I could not open my mouth to pray—that it would be a sin to take the Lord's name on my sin-polluted lips. My sins arose like mountains before me; and as I arose it seemed as though these words were spoken by some one in the room, "The prayer of the wicked availeth nothing." I crept into bed with a heavy heart, when the thought occurred to me, What if I should die before morning? Hell would be my portion. I feared that I had sinned away the day of grace, as I had heard that such could be the case. I was in great distress of mind. Finally I thought I would go down and get my father to pray for me, as I had great confidence in his religion. I felt sure the Lord would hear him, for he was good. Then something seemed to say, The Baptists do not believe in praying; he will only laugh at you if you go. So I did not go, but kept thinking of my awful condition, when it seemed to me that my breath began to grow short, and I felt myself sinking down to endless woe, as I believed; and with the cry, O my God, I am dying! I sprang up in bed.

Thus time passed until I began to receive invitations to attend parties and private dances, which I enjoyed exceedingly, and for a time I forgot all my good resolutions; but occasionally, after I had been out enjoying the gayeties of the world, a sadness and gloom would overshadow my mind, and many a time I have wept myself to sleep when I would realize what a wicked course I was leading. On June 22d, 1876, death again entered our home, and took a lovely sister. This I felt was almost more than I could bear; and it also

proved to me that the young were liable to die. I again had to examine myself to see what would have been my fate had it been me. So I again resumed my secret devotions, and attended meeting at Barnerville regularly, to hear a man by the name of Powel. I was greatly taken up with his preaching; and hearing that he intended the following winter to hold a protracted meeting, I resolved to be one of the first to go forward, as I now felt sure that that was the mistake I had made, in not making known publicly my desire to serve the Lord. In the winter of 1877 I went to Knowersville, Albany Co., New York, to visit my sister. I had always thought the Baptists seemed to be good people, but I did not know what they believed, and I sometimes thought they did not know themselves. I thought if they did, they might preach so that other people could understand them. I heard some one say that the Baptists believed they were the only people that would be saved, and everybody else was going to be lost. I told them I thought they were mistaken, as I had never heard my father make any such assertion. Accordingly, previous to my going on my visit, I had a talk with my father. I asked him if he believed what I heard. He said he believed that God had a chosen people, that Christ died to redeem his people from their sins, and that he had said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." Then I inquired, "Will a certain class have to go to hell, no matter how hard they try to be good?" (I was thinking of myself.) Then he went on to explain, by quoting Scripture; but I could not understand him. I know I felt very angry at all the Baptists, and felt that I hated such a selfish belief; and as I arose to retire I said, "Well, pa, there is one thing certain: I will never be an Old School Baptist." He looked up and smiled, saying, "No, of course you will not, unless the Lord makes you one." I was just passing out of the door, and as I closed it I said within myself, "I will not be one any way." Well, as I before stated, I went on my visit. One day my sister and I were speaking of dying, as our inevitable fate, and my sister said that every one ought to make some preparation for that great event. She said she had no fears for any of our family except a brother and sister, which she mentioned as seeming the most careless of any. I asked her if she would have no fears for me. She readily answered, "No." "O," I exclaimed, "you don't know what a sinner I am then." "Why are you such a great sinner?" she asked. "You have committed no unpardonable sin, such as murder, stealing, &c." "No," I replied, "but I am such a great sinner that God will never forgive me, I fear." "O, you should not feel so. Be as near right as you can, read your Bible and pray, and I know the Lord will forgive you." "I have done all this," I re-

plied, "but it seems to do no good, for I get worse instead of better, and for some time past I have given up reading the Bible or trying to pray." But she admonished me not to weary in well doing. Therefore I resumed my secret devotions, feeling in myself that if a person was faithful, the Lord was in duty bound to forgive him. One night I retired to my room and read my Bible as usual, and knelt down to pray; but it seemed as though my sins arose like mountains before me, threatening every moment to crush me beneath their weight. O what a wretched sinner I felt myself to be! I thought I could not see how God could be just and save such a vile sinner as I now saw myself to be; for had I not been living in open rebellion against God for eighteen years? Not one good deed had I ever performed; and now I saw plainly that I never could. I cried from the depth of my guilty soul, "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner." I felt that he was just and holy, and I laid before him a poor, helpless, condemned criminal. Then these words came to my mind,

"O to be nothing, nothing!  
Only to lie at his feet;  
A broken and empty vessel,  
For the Master's use made meet."

O what a love I felt for him! And as I felt that hell was my just portion, I cried, "Only permit me to sing thy praises, Lord, and I shall be satisfied." All fear of hell seemed taken away, and I felt that I must be reconciled to my fate, for it was just. In this condition I arose from my knees; but O! the agony of my mind, the burden of sin on my guilty heart, I can never describe to any one. I got into bed, but I dared not put the light out and be left in the dark with my guilty conscience. But I could not sleep, so finally I sat up in bed, turned up the light, picked up the Bible, and opened it, hoping I might find something to comfort me. I opened to the eleventh chapter of Romans, and read, "I say then, Hath God cast away his people?" I stopped, and there I feel the Lord revealed to me that he had a people, that Christ died to redeem them from their sins, that they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they were secure, and that none could pluck them out of his hand. That sealed my fate, as I thought, forever. Now I could see why the Lord had not heard my prayers, and that it must also be the reason that I had always been such a sinner; for I thought surely if I had been chosen in him I should have been free from sin. Then I turned to my Bible and finished the first verse, and commenced reading the second, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." It then seemed that a bright light shone around me and on my Bible, and my burden of sin was all removed. I could see that I was one of his chosen people, and that Christ had died to redeem me from all my sins; and all the sins I might commit in the future,

through the weakness of the flesh, as well as my past sins, were blotted out by the precious blood of Jesus. I could truly "read my title clear to mansions in the skies." O what a joyful season! You, no doubt, dear brother, know by your own experience how impossible it is to find words to express the rapturous joy of that moment. The first I realized what I was about, I was walking the floor, clapping my hands, and crying, "Glory to God! I am saved! I am saved! Glory be to his holy name!" I started to go down stairs to tell my sister and her husband the joyful news, when something seemed to say, "I would not go; they will only laugh at you. Besides, you are not sure that your sins are forgiven. Perhaps it is all imagination." I went back to bed, thinking, Well, if I have been deceived, I will tell no one else, to deceive them. I fell asleep, feeling rather dark in my mind. The next day, however, contrary to my resolution, before I realized what I was doing I was telling my sister of my hope, with tears of joy running down my cheeks; but I felt condemned the next moment, for I felt that I had deceived her, and I would not have done it for the world. Well, the time arrived for me to return home. The same day I received a letter from a lady friend, telling me what a great revival they were having at Barnerville, and that she wished I was there to attend. I took the train that evening for home, as I had intended, fully resolved in my mind to say nothing to my father about my feelings. My father met me at the depot, and as soon as we got started for home I asked him how all the people were getting along in Barnerville. He replied, "O they are having a great time. They claim to have nearly the whole place converted; but I have no confidence in their foolishness. Now, Jennie, I am willing that you shall attend the meetings if you wish to, but I want you to keep off their anxious-bench." "I have no desire to, pa, for I hope I have an experience of my own," I replied, bursting into tears. "Is that so, Jennie? Thank God for that. I am glad to hear it," he replied. "I was almost afraid to have you come home; but I have had my fears for nothing." And he broke completely down, and wept like a child. After he had taken care of his horse he came in, and O how his face beamed with happiness as he related to me his experience and call to the ministry. After he was through he asked me to tell him my experience; but after hearing him tell such a good experience, I felt as though I had nothing to tell, and told him so. I feared more than ever that I had been mistaken; but he urged me to tell what I could. I did try, but was able to say but a little. But he seemed well satisfied with what I told; and after he had sung a hymn and offered a prayer (it being about midnight) we retired. I went to my bed with a heavy heart, think-

ing I had deceived my dear father, but I could not deceive God. I thought surely if I was one of God's children I would not have the doubts that I then had. Within the next few days several of my girl friends called to see me, and spoke very highly of the meeting, and invited me to go. I had a great desire to go, and try to tell them my experience; for I was just foolish enough then to think that by telling them my experience (for I began to hope again that I did have one to tell) they would at once see what a foolish course they were taking, and that it took the mighty God to save a poor, lost sinner. So I asked my father if it would be wrong for me to go down some evening and tell them my experience. He said no, if I had a desire to. I could hardly wait for the evening to come; and after I got there I could hardly wait for the man to get through preaching. I could but wonder how I ever could have cared for such preaching. I remember one expression. He said, "I stand here, as it were, with one hand hold of the throne of grace, and the other I reach down to you; and all you have to do is to come and take my hand, and I will bring you right up to the throne. Will you come?" O, I thought, what blasphemy! The house was full, and as I sat there I thought, Now there are a great many people here; what if I should break down? how mortified I should feel. I think the best way will be to plan out what I intend to say as I sit here, and then it will be easier for me; but try as I would, I could not form a single sentence, and I settled back in my seat breathing this prayer, "O Lord, if you have anything for me to say, fill my mouth." From that moment all fear was taken away, and as soon as he gave opportunity to speak I arose, and spoke with a liberty that surprised myself. I never knew what I said, but I know I had a great desire to give God all the praise. I heard afterward that the minister said, "That was regular Old School Baptist talk." But he said he never had heard such a beautiful flow of language from anybody's mouth. It did not flatter me, as I felt that if I had been enabled to express my mind fully, all praise was due my God, who rules in righteousness. After services all my so-called friends flocked around me, shaking my hand, some saying they were glad to hear what I had come to tell. One lady said she was glad I had found the Savior. I was just about to reply that I did not find him, but that he found me, in a waste, howling wilderness; but others came up, and she stepped back. I must confess that I had no fellowship for them. Just then I noticed a lady coming up the aisle, with such a sweet expression of love on her face that I said within myself, I like that woman; and as she came up I held out my hand, and we shook hands, she saying, "I liked to hear you talk." I replied, "If I said anything good, the

Lord put it into my mouth, or rather into my heart; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh." After she passed on I turned to my step-mother and asked her who that lady was, for I liked her. She said it was sister Livingston, from East Cobleskill. I thought, That accounts for my liking her. In a few days I heard that some had made up their minds that I never could have talked as good as I did if my father had not composed it for me, and that I had committed it to memory, for it sounded just like him. I returned home in a very happy frame of mind. All doubts were taken away, and I could say of a truth, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" and because he lives, I shall live. When we reached home my father said he had had a good meeting all alone. I did not sleep very much that night, my heart was drawn out in prayer and praise, and I cried out many times during the night, "Glory be to his holy name, for his goodness and mercy to me, the chief of sinners." Mother told me that she thought pa had not slept very much, as he had been up a good share of the night walking the floor, and she could hear him saying, "Praise the Lord! Glory be to God for his goodness," &c. It was indeed a season of great rejoicing. In the morning all nature seemed to be praising God. I thought all my trials were over, and as long as I remained here on earth I would have nothing to do but sing his praises, and ever live in that heavenly frame of mind. For two weeks it was "a heaven below my Redeemer to know." Then my mind became exercised on the subject of baptism; but I began to doubt my worthiness, as I found that I had two natures, and feared I was not good enough. But I thought, If I feel satisfied with myself, and feel that I am worthy, when it becomes warm weather, some beautiful day when the birds are singing I would like to go to Lexington and be taken into that church, as my parents and my oldest brother had been baptized there. But that was not the Lord's will. My father, Elder Lambert Gass, had an appointment at Jefferson on the seventh and eighth days of April, 1877, and I accompanied him, but against my natural inclination. I felt that there was a higher power in it. I told my experience, or rather tried to; for I feel that I told so little. They seemed satisfied, and received me for baptism on the next day. O what trouble my mind was in that night, for fear I had deceived the church; for I thought surely if they knew me as I knew myself they never could have received me. I prayed, if I ever did in my life, that if it was wrong for me to be baptized it would storm and be so rough that we could not go to the water. I fell asleep quite late, expecting to find it very stormy and boisterous in the morning; but when I awoke the sun was shining in my window, and I must confess that it was as clear and bright a day as I

ever saw. Therefore I went willingly, feeling it was the Lord's will, and was buried in baptism by my beloved father. To me his face shone with the glory of God as he led me down into the water. They sang,

"This is the way I long have sought,  
And mourned because I found it not."

How good the words sounded, as they seemed to fit my case exactly. I did not experience the joy that I have heard some relate, but I felt a peace and quietness of spirit, compared to my feelings of the night before.

Thus, dear brother, I have tried to relate to you what I hope has been my christian experience; but I fear I have been too lengthy. Forgive me if I have wearied you, for it seems that I could not help expressing myself just as I have. I hope I have written it with an eye single to God's glory. I must say in conclusion that I have had many doubts and fears, many trials and temptations by the way, and have felt and do yet feel myself to be a poor, miserable sinner by nature. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; but I can say of a truth, I have always found that the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him. Do with this as you see fit, and I will abide by it, for I feel to rely on your judgment.

A sinner saved by grace,  
JENNIE CROSS.

CURFEW, Pa., March 5, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—At the close of my last letter I spoke of a sermon that I had heard about the year 1858, at a time when I had been reflecting about a law or legal righteousness, and at the same time I had a desire to know what the Old Baptists believed. The text used upon that occasion was Matthew i. 21. I did not comprehend all the minister said, but many of the most important points were deeply impressed upon my mind; and now, after the lapse of nearly thirty years, several quotations from the Scriptures used on that occasion are still fresh in my memory. From quotations he proved by the Scriptures the knowledge and power of God, such as, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlvi. 10. And of the promised Savior by such as this, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," &c.; "and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah ix. 6. The object of his coming into the world to save his people from their sins he showed to be in accordance with prophecy, by saying, "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." I said above that

the preacher proved by these and other passages of Scripture the knowledge and power of God, the promised Savior, the object of his coming into the world, which was to save his people, whom he foreknew. I felt that these were Bible truths, and I dared not dispute them without rejecting the teaching of the Bible, because it seemed to me then to be filled with this doctrine, but which I could not receive as my doctrine. It was not the Lord's time for me to receive it. My thoughts were something like this: Now this may all be true, and it looks very much like truth, because here are the scriptural proofs; but I cannot grasp them; I cannot bear witness to them; I cannot personally say, This doctrine is the truth; but I now see that the Baptists believe in salvation by grace, that is, letting the Lord do all the work. Then how will I ever know that the Lord will save me? I secretly thought, I desire to remove these things far from my mind, because I cannot fully comprehend them; and I will crush them if I can. I think about this time, and during the same year, I became dead to religious emotions, and sought contentment in earthly enjoyments, Satan with all his allurements being always at hand to suggest something for the employment of mind and body; so that I was apparently satisfied with my condition in life.

I think it was about the beginning of 1859 that my health began to be impaired, and during that year I seemed to be on the decline physically, which made me have serious reflections in regard to my future, and the question would arise, Will I get strong again, or not? As that year was nearly closing I found that my health was slowly but surely giving way to disease. I would look at those around me in good health, and would envy their enjoyment. O, thought I, if I only had good health and strength I would be happy! I could then obtain everything else in this world that I wanted. I even envied the domestic animals that I saw, and thought they were happier than I was. I had such tenacity of life that I could not allow my mind to think of dying for any length of time; and by way of diversion, that I might forget my sad condition, I took up the study of mathematics, which was my favorite branch of study at school, and dived as deep as my limited ability would allow. Rising very early in the morning, I would study until school time; and also while at school I was all the time engaged in studying. I sometimes thought, I can solve many hard problems, but I cannot get my desired health and strength. At the beginning of the year 1860 I looked like a living skeleton, being greatly reduced in flesh, with a sallow complexion. My parents and friends were anxious about my welfare; but as I had been able to walk around, though taking medicine for several months, they hoped by the return of

spring that I would recover again. Some time about the last of January or the first of February, 1860, my father thought best to keep me out of school, thinking I would be relieved from study, and would have more opportunity to regain strength; but this did not relieve me, for my disease was now assuming a chronic form, and it took the strongest medicine that I could get to produce an action of the liver. I was evidently slowly getting worse. Life now became a burden to me, and I was forced against my will to think of the life beyond this vale of tears. For several months previous to this time I had, as I thought, and as I now believe, led a moral life. I had had no occasion for the use of profane language, falsifying, or anything of the kind, as was the case with others that I could point to; but this gave me very little satisfaction, for I thought, What will this avail with God? Morality is good and commendable among men; but God cannot accept man on the ground of his morality. Up to about this time I had looked to earth for help and to earthly friends for comfort in my distress; but now appeared a great gulf before me, without any way of retreat. I had tried the law of Moses for justification, but without success. The law now appeared to me like mount Sinai of old; instead of giving me an assurance of blessing, in thunder-tones it assured me that "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." I then felt that flesh was too weak to do all things and to continue to do all things written in the law; and also that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. I did not know what to do. Death stared me in the face, and I was a stranger to God. I had never spoken to God in prayer, and felt that I was too far from him by wicked works to come near him in prayer. O how often my soul in secret thought desired to pray to God for mercy! But I could not pray; I dared not approach him. In this condition I felt as though I was in a pit of despair, without any earthly friend able to give relief, or any one on high to interpose for my relief. My father had taken me to another physician, in the hope of restoring me to health; and on our visit at his office he and father assured me of a speedy cure, no doubt more for my encouragement than really a conviction of conscience. A month or two of his treatment did not seem to have any beneficial effect upon my system, and I was completely discouraged. I have often thought since, when looking back to the time that I am now trying to speak about, of the darkness that gathered over my soul. I realized that it was only a question of time, and a very short time, when I must depart from these shores, and where, O! where would I go? Dear brethren, language fails me. I cannot tell you, as I then realized, the great im-

portance of this subject. I feel like making a long pause here, and standing still, because of the solemn feelings that I then had. I was in the midst of thick darkness before, behind, around, above, beneath. Despair had set in, in all its fury and torment, and hope seemed to have fled. Never before nor since have I had such an experience; and if it was the teaching of the Lord, I cannot expect ever to experience the like again. I am not able to say how long this state of mind lasted, but I think for several weeks, with some variation. One day in early spring I went to the forest. The wind was blowing, and I heard a strange noise. I thought the world was now coming to an end, and I ran for fear, feeling that I was too great a sinner to stand in God's presence at the great day. I afterward found that the noise proceeded from two tree-tops crossing each other; and as the wind caused them to vibrate, it produced the unearthly (as I thought) noise.

In the month of May, 1860, my grandfather died, who had lived several miles away from our home. The family all went to the funeral except an older brother, who was left to stay with me. After staying with me awhile he concluded to go out gunning, and I was left alone. My condition of despair seemed to press heavily on my mind, and this day in particular; and after lamenting the lost and sad state that I was in, the thought of death came with unusual force. I saw that I must die, and that shortly; so this fearful darkness that could be felt came, bearing me down with its mighty load of grief.

"In that dark hour how did I groan,  
And weep for years of error,"  
as expressed by the poet. Right here seemed to be an end of something; and now, as I write, in looking back to that time, as it was presented to me then, it was like the idea that some persons have of the end of literal earth, or jumping-off place, where below and beyond all is chaos. Now, at this end of something, as it was shown to me (it may be the end of the law, for all that I know), hope was set before me. Was this the anchor of my soul? Hope! how sweet dost thou appear to-day. Yea, much sweeter then. What did I hope for then? I hoped the Lord would allow me to pray, although a guilty, undeserving wretch, who had no other refuge. I bowed myself before a chair and tried to pray; but my tongue refused to speak, and I could not pray. If I uttered an audible sound I knew it not; but I think I felt that the Lord was there. Such a solemnity came over me as I cannot describe. All that I remember trying to say was for the Lord to have mercy. I do not think I said it, but thought it. After rising from my humble position I thought I had miserably failed in praying; but there was a relief that I never had before—a commencing as it were of a new life with me, and my secret thought was now prayer. "Lord, have mer-

cy;" and, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Some who read this may think that I attached too much importance to the subject of prayer. Naturally I had looked upon the service of prayer as of great importance, and one of great solemnity; and when it became an essential to my very existence, and which I was driven to by actual necessity, the law being magnified a thousand fold and more, which was my school-master to bring me to Christ, how solemn the thought to speak to the Lord at the throne of grace, especially when a vile sinner, who is sensible of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

As ever, in fellowship,

J. BEEMAN.

CHESTER, Ky., April 16, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I see that Elder Durand has in the SIGNS for April 15th made some quotations from the Circular Letter of Licking Association of 1886, to prove that the late Elder T. P. Dudley believed that the choice of God in Christ before the foundation of the world was of sinners of Adam's race, and that sinners of Adam's race are born from above. I desire to state, by your permission, that I, being appointed by the association the year previous, presented said Circular Letter for the purpose of combatting those very principles; and also, that Elder T. P. Dudley did not write the Circular Letter of 1852, as Elder Durand alleges. Any one knowing that I presented said Circular Letter, and seeing Elder Durand's construction, would naturally conclude that he had rightly interpreted, did I not disavow it. I beg of you, in justice to myself as a man, that you will allow me to be heard in this matter, without any design of entering into a discussion through the SIGNS of those disputed points. Elder T. P. Dudley's sentiments are too well known for any forced construction of detached sentences to place him in a false position before his brethren, especially so while his Circular Letter upon the "origin, nature and effects of the christian warfare" is extant, which is diametrically opposite to that attributed to him by Elder Durand.

Desiring the peace of Zion upon the principles of the doctrine of Christ, I remain yours in the hope of the gospel,

J. H. WALLINGFORD.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 1, 1888.

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ENMITY BETWEEN SEEDS.

"AND the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."—Gen. iii. 14, 15.

Of the unfathomable mystery of iniquity no created being can know anything except what is revealed by the Spirit, which searcheth all things, "yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 10. While all such revelation must be unquestionably true, it is not safe for the saints to receive the suggestions of every spirit without the assurance that the spirit is of God. Not only are the doctrines and commandments of men to be tested by the infallible criterion which God has given, but the spirits by which any sentiment is presented must be tried by the standard which John was moved by the Spirit of Christ to record. Including with himself all the inspired servants of God, whose testimony is recorded in the Scriptures, he says, "We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."—1 John iv. 6. In his efforts to be more wise than the Scriptures teach, man seeks to find out by dint of study the things which the eternal Father has purposely concealed from the scrutiny of creatures. The result is that he deceives himself with the vain thought that he has discovered truth, while he has only grasped a falsehood which originated in his own imagination. It is but natural that such erroneous notions as are devised by the natural mind should to that mind appear consistent. Hence the readiness with which the world will receive error, while truth is rejected by the multitude in every age, as it was in the time when they with one voice chose the murderer Barabbas in preference to the guiltless Lord of life and glory.—Matt. xxvii. 15-26.

In this text, on which we have been repeatedly requested to write, two facts are clearly presented; first, that the Lord God was able to vindicate his absolute sovereignty over the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, as declared Revelation xx. 2; and secondly, that it was by the decree of the Lord God himself that enmity should be between the serpent and the woman, and between his seed and her seed. Without the necessity of a change in that God who claims immutability, it must be that the sentence was included in his eternal purpose of electing love,

in which he chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. It did not defeat any purpose of eternal wisdom when sin came into the world by the transgression of the law which was given to Adam in the "very good" condition in which he was created. All that is revealed on that subject is that before his transgression of the restriction under which he was placed by his Creator he was innocent; and in the day when he did eat of the forbidden tree he was dead to that sinless condition in which he was created. To say that this was not included in the eternal purpose of God, is to deny the infinity of his knowledge and power. But if he is not infinite in all his perfections, then he is not God as he has declared himself in the Scriptures. Hence the denial that sin was included in his eternal purpose is to deny that he is God. But the confession of his infinite sovereignty explains all the mystery which attends the developments of time, and settles all with the reason assigned by our Lord, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." This is as much as it is given to any creature to know of the reason for any act or design of our God. To all the aspirations of created minds for understanding of his appointments he answers, that "He giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 13. And even to his chosen people, to whom he is a refuge and strength, he says, "Be still, and know that I am God."—Psalm xlvi. 10.

To this doctrine of the unrestricted sovereignty of God in all the events of time, the objection was raised in Paul's day, "Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" No better evidence could be given by opposers of the doctrine, to prove it the same truth which was preached by Paul, than the fact that they have not yet found any other objection against it but that which Paul so effectually answered by referring to the absolute sovereignty of the Creator.—See Rom. ix. 8-24. In regard to the text under consideration, the failure to recognize this essential truth has resulted in much confusion to the saints, who are constantly taught the same fact in all their personal experience. Without the confidence that our God controls all the powers of darkness, how could we trust to his protecting care over us for time and for eternity? If his control is confined to such events as we call *good*, then it must be a very limited sovereignty indeed which is under his dominion; and in that control there could be no assurance to comfort those whose apprehension of danger arises from fears of the evil which not only surrounds them in the world, but is ever present in their own hearts. To afford comfort in the case of such characters, the arm of the Lord must reach even to the perfect government of all the workers of iniquity in earth and hell.

Only that God "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" can certainly secure the deliverance of the conscious sinner from his sins. His omnipotence was attested in bringing again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. In that greatest display of divine sovereignty ever revealed to his creatures, he gave to all who have the faith to receive it, assurance of the fact that he will judge the world in righteousness by that same Jesus "who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."—Rom. iv. 25. This leaves no room for doubt of the final salvation of every one whose sins were laid upon him.

In the cunning craftiness of deceivers who would rob the saints of their rest in the unlimited sovereignty of God, it is suggested that there is danger of "making God the author of sin" if they accept the doctrine of his universal government over all events. This suggestion is so abhorrent to the saint who truly loves the holiness of the Lord that he is easily frightened by it; so that he fails to observe that it is not authorized by the word of inspiration. Nowhere in the Scriptures has the Lord called upon his creatures to vindicate his holiness. It is by him that his chosen people are justified; but he requires no defense of his own character at their hands. It is not strange that those who attempt such a task are met at every point by the clear testimony of Scripture, which rebukes their presumption, demanding of them, "Who hath required this at your hand?" Being under no law, it is impossible that God should sin; "for sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John iii. 4. But the law can be transgressed only by those who are under its dominion; hence the admission of the fact that God is sovereign clearly implies that he cannot sin. The frightful expression, "Author of sin," is borrowed from the jargon of carnal religion, and is as destitute of real significance as those other hackneyed phrases of Babylonish origin, "Conditions of grace" and "Offers of salvation." Sin can have no "author," being the act of the sinner. To deny that God purposed that there should be sinners in the world, is a denial that the salvation of sinners by the Lord Jesus was contemplated before the world was called into existence. This is too manifest a contradiction of the Scriptures to deceive any believer of the truth.

In the first verse of our text the ample power of God over the deceiving serpent is manifest in the fact that the sentence pronounced against him was final and effectual. This forbids the theory that the power of Satan is independent of the God who created him in common with all beings and worlds. Not only has the natural serpent ever obeyed the decree here pronounced by the Lord

God, but the same is true of that evil spirit which is in Scripture called the old serpent. His coming is always "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." He also is strictly confined to the diet assigned him in this sentence. He and all his progeny still lick the dust. In other words, "They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity."—Hosea iv. 8. This is illustrated by the eagerness with which the enemies of truth feast upon anything wrong in the conduct of the saints. That is the food which the Lord has given to the serpent and his seed; and sometimes the food sticks so close to them that the saints fear the serpent is attacking them, when he is only licking up their sins, which are his rightful food or meat. It is at best a thankless task to feed serpents. May the Lord keep us by his grace walking in his right way, so that the old serpent may have no meat in our department on which to feed.

It should be carefully noted that the Lord God himself put enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between their seeds. So long as the Lord God shall retain power to execute his sentence, this enmity must remain between these opposing powers. Some of those who appear to be lovers of truth have erred in attempting to excuse the Lord from responsibility for this enmity between the seeds. In their earnest zeal in this work they have concluded that in some way Satan came into existence without the will of God, if not against that will, and that he maliciously originated all the enmity which has ever been manifested by him and his seed against the woman and her seed. Such theorists seem to have failed to notice that they directly contradict what God himself declares in this sentence. It is not stated as an existing fact to be greatly deplored, that this enmity should be between these seeds; but the Lord God himself declares that he will put enmity between them. Also, he positively declares the very definite extent to which that enmity shall affect both the seed of the woman and the serpent. "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Thus in as clear and unmistakable terms as our language contains, the decree of the Lord God recorded in that sentence upon the serpent the very work which he was to do in the development of the mystery of iniquity, as well as the ultimate victory of the antitypical Seed of the woman, in which Satan was destroyed, as signified by the bruising of the serpent's head. This sentence would be no more fulfilled if the serpent had failed to bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman, than if his head had not been bruised under the heel of that Seed. The one event is no more positively declared than the other. This is what we call the absolute predestination of God in all things. Without this doctrine there can be no certainty of the fulfillment

of any promise given by inspiration of God, since that promise might be defeated by some unforeseen contingency. While we do not insist upon the employment of this name for this truth, we dare not consent to forsake the doctrine which recognizes God as the supreme Ruler of all things, whether in heaven, on earth, or in the bottomless pit. In the sentence passed upon the serpent the Lord God no more went beyond his own righteous authority than in the sentence passed upon the sinning man to whom he gave the law.

By some it is thought dangerous to hold the truth of the unlimited sovereignty of God in all things, without a distinction between things which are good and things which are evil. It has been said that while in some sense it must be admitted that God did include in his predestination the existence of sin in the world, it was not in the same way in which he predestinated the good things. The good being positively decreed, while the evil were decreed only in a permissive way. The difference between a positive and a permissive decree is not very manifest, unless it be held that the thing permissively decreed may not really come to pass; but such a decree would imply a lack of wisdom or of power in the God whose decree was thus disappointed. If a permissive decree is as sure of fulfillment as a positive decree, it is not clear that anything is gained by the distinction between them. It will hardly be claimed, however, that the sentence pronounced upon the serpent was a merely permissive decree. And if the enmity was by the express act of the Lord God put between the serpent and his seed, on the one part, and the woman and her seed, on the other, it does seem that there can be no room to question that it was the purpose of God that it should be so. Although it is beyond the power of any created intelligence to understand how the holy God could include in his eternal purpose the transgression of his commandment by his creature man, yet the fact is clearly revealed in the Scriptures that it was so included, and that this was but one link in the chain of his providence by which he would reveal his eternal purpose of love in the salvation of his people from their sins.

The recognition of this truth is indispensable to the comfort of the saints in their severe trials while passing through this world of conflicts and doubts and fears. Without it, where can they find rest when they realize their insufficiency for the warfare in which they must be constantly engaged, striving against sin?

As the bruising of the serpent's head signifies the triumph of our Lord Jesus when through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; so the declaration that "thou shalt bruise his heel" asserts with the certainty of divine truth the ceaseless efforts of the evil one to distress and afflict the members of the body of Christ who

are sojourning in this valley of the shadow of death. The heel is that portion of the natural body which must come in contact with the earth; the saints who are in the world are well represented as being exposed to such constant conflict with earthly opposition and temptation. In this unending strife they often feel that they are sorely bruised and cast down through the enmity of their adversary, who is the same serpent whom the Lord God cursed, as recorded in the language of our text.

In presenting the above thoughts upon the text under consideration, we have written with no purpose of entering the field of controversy which is the favorite ground of some who claim to know all about the text to which our attention was called. If what we have written is not found to be in harmony with the truth of revelation and the experience of the saints, it should be rejected. If it is found to bear the seal of divine approval in the Scriptures, then it will remain the eternal truth of God, though it should be rejected by all the religious world. There is no other safe guide for the disciple of Jesus except that Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. He is the abiding witness in every one who is born of God; and his testimony always perfectly agrees with the inspired record of the Scriptures which bear witness of Jesus. Every spirit which speaks against this record is not of God, but is antichrist.—1 John iv. 3. Whatever other claims may be presented to commend any doctrine to the acceptance of the saints, they are not at liberty to receive anything which has not this royal seal of inspired authority. While we would not be ignorant of the devices of the adversary, may the Lord inspire us all with the sincere desire to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." With this knowledge revealed in our heart, we may well afford to leave the endless genealogies of the origin of evil and of Satan to the infinite wisdom of that God who "hath made all for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4.

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

At the commencement of the current volume we published a special rate to our subscribers at which they might procure and forward *new* subscribers until April 1st, 1888. Many have responded, and sent us in the aggregate several hundred new names; but owing to the extremely severe weather throughout a large portion of the country, many have written us that they have not been able to get around among the brethren. We have therefore decided to extend the time, and will until further notice receive subscriptions for *new* subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three

dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

These terms apply to none but those who are subscribers. Any one whose name is not on our list, and who wishes to take advantage of these rates, can send two dollars for his own subscription, and one dollar each for all other *new* subscribers.

#### BOOK NOTICES.

##### CHURCH HISTORY DEBT.

WE publish below some extracts from a letter we have just received from Elder Hassell. It was sent us as a private communication; but we have taken the liberty, without asking brother Hassell's consent, to publish portions of it that we think our brethren and friends should read. This matter should receive immediate attention; and let every one that can and will assist in paying this debt make it a point to attend to it at the first possible moment, as delay may cause brother Hassell a very great sacrifice.—ED.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., April 13, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Accept my thanks for your article in the SIGNS in regard to the Church History debt of two thousand dollars, and your favor of the sixth instant inclosing two dollars from brother J. D. Hubbell as a contribution toward paying the debt, and suggesting that I publish every month the list of those who contribute. The suggestion is, I think, an excellent one; and I hope to send you the first of each month the list of those who have contributed the preceding month, and the amounts contributed, together with the total amount up to the time. \* \* \*

The two thousand dollars represents my unavoidable expenses, above my income, during the six years when I was preparing the history; and upon this principal of my note I have already paid six hundred and forty dollars interest. I charge nothing whatever for my father's four years and my six years of labor; but I would feel thankful to the brethren and friends if they would kindly help me pay the large debt which I have contracted as much for their benefit as for my own.

On the first of March of the present year I was compelled to mortgage, or transfer as collateral security, all my property, except my books and school apparatus, to secure the payment of the Church History debt; and the

present prospect is that the property, though really worth twice the amount of the debt, will be entirely sacrificed to pay it. I sold myself out of house and home in Wilson, mainly to try to get money to pay this debt, and am now boarding; and, though working hard day and night, it is with difficulty that I can board and clothe my family, much less get us a home. The two churches that I try to serve in the ministry do not give me fifty dollars a year. \* \* \*

Please write me on the inclosed postal card what is the post-office of brother J. D. Hubbell, as I record on my ledger the names and post-offices and amounts of all who contribute toward defraying the Church History debt. \* \* \*

Yours in love,  
SYLVESTER HASSELL.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., April 13, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am glad to see a movement on foot to at least partially reimburse brother Hassell for his outlay upon the history. While the history was specially authorized by the Kehukee Association, yet it is of such general interest that I feel sure that our brotherhood generally will feel willing to contribute in that direction, if the matter can be properly called to their attention. My observation has been that our brethren are generous when any worthy object is presented to them in its proper light; but this is more a demand of justice than of generosity. If brother Hassell were to receive anything like a proper recompense for his time, cost of large correspondence, purchase of books of authority, the sacrifice of his school interests, the employment of teachers in his place while engaged in this work, he would receive twelve thousand dollars instead of two. For all this brother Hassell has the answer of a good conscience and the satisfaction of work well done; but shall we not share his burden, and also for ourselves desire a good conscience in helping him?

Now, brethren, I have this to propose for all churches and associations where the SIGNS circulates. Let the matter be brought up publicly in the churches everywhere, and a day appointed when contributions may be made to this end. There is hardly any church where from ten to thirty dollars could not be raised if the matter was properly taken hold of, and raised easily. Also, our spring associations are coming on very soon. Why would it not be well to lay the matter before the brethren at these meetings? I hope the matter will be pushed forward at once. United effort will lift the burden easily.

I make these suggestions for our southern and northern churches alike. Brethren Beebe, do you think well of these suggestions?

As ever, your brother in hope,  
F. A. CHICK.

MARRIAGES.

On April 5, 1888, by Elder Wm. J. Purington, at his residence in Hopewell, N. J., Mr. Charles E. Yerkes, of Moreland, and Miss Ida E. Edwards, of Radnor, both of Pennsylvania.

MARCH 18, 1888, at the residence of Mr. Ashley, Prince William County, Va., by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, Mr. John Clark and Miss Fanny Cole, both of Prince William Co., Va.

MARCH 20, 1888, at the residence of the bride, Washington, D. C., by the same, Mr. George E. Anchony, of Pennsylvania, and Miss Ida J. Bell, of Washington, D. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

AFTER indisposition for a year, and serious illness for three months, my half-brother, **Dr. Alonzo Hassell**, died of capillary bronchitis, 4 a. m., Sunday, April 8, 1888, at his residence in Williamston, N. C. He was the son of Elder C. B. and Mrs. Martha M. Hassell, and was born Sept. 23, 1851. He graduated with the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Baltimore, Md., Feb. 22, 1872. On Feb. 5, 1873, he married Miss Ida, the daughter of Mr. John R. and Mrs. Mary Lanier; and she and five children, the three eldest being boys, Theodore, Alonzo and John, and the two youngest girls, Della and Ida, all less than fourteen years of age, survive her. An infant daughter named Mary, aged fifty-three days, died Dec. 25, 1885.

Brother Alonzo has been divinely enabled to lead an honorable and useful life. He was a plain, straight forward, honest, truthful, candid, temperate, quiet, resolute, industrious, kind-hearted and forgiving man. For sixteen years he practiced medicine in his native town and county with the most indefatigable zeal and with increasing skill and reputation, meeting for many years with great opposition, but without fighting it openly or secretly, living it down. No matter how hot or cold or stormy the weather, how dark the night, how distant the journey, how lonely or wild or bad the road, how poor and unable to pay him was the patient, and how unwell he himself was, if he could only get up into his buggy and ride, he delighted to hasten to alleviate the pains of suffering humanity. If the patient had been a bitter enemy he would go so much the more eagerly and minister to him the more tenderly. Perhaps two-thirds of his practice was of a charitable nature. Multitudes of the poor feel, like his family, to be irreparably bereaved, and anxiously ask, What shall we poor people do now for a doctor? He spared his family, his servants and his horses, but would not spare himself, and, like his father, he literally worked himself to death. He had rheumatism occasionally for fourteen years, and the attacks increased in duration and severity. After suffering with the cramp every night about eight months, and then dreadfully with rheumatism about two months, he went out too soon, in inclement weather, to visit a patient, and contracted the bronchial trouble that ended his life.

For many years he has shown uncommon interest in spiritual and eternal things, and has been a frequent attendant on preaching. He admitted to his mother years ago that his deepest concern, that which met him first in the morning and remained with him last at night, was the matter of his sins and his salvation. Others as well as myself have been satisfied for years that he had a hope in Christ; and this he plainly confessed to me the last day of his life, and said that he wished to live in order to perform his long-neglected duty and unite with the church. I told him that the one thing

needful for eternal salvation was not the baptism of water, but that of the Holy Ghost.

His remains were buried Monday, April 9th, in the town cemetery at Williamston. All the places of business in town were closed, all the large bells were tolled, and the most numerous attended funeral procession that ever passed through the streets of Williamston solemnly and tenderly accompanied the body of "the beloved physician" to its last resting place. I believe that no person in Martin County will be more sadly missed than he. A large number of families feel to be deeply and personally bereaved.

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., April 9, 1888.

DEPARTED this life December 7, 1887, at Salisbury, Md., **Joseph C. Bell**. He had been afflicted for some time with rheumatism, but had not been confined to his bed until the morning of his death. He lay that morning until about ten o'clock, when, it is supposed, he felt a sense of suffocation, and arose and opened the door and window, and on returning to the bed fell upon the floor, where he was found a moment or two after, just breathing. He passed away without speaking. He was born February 3, 1836. At an early age he was left an orphan, and his care and training devolved upon his sister, Mrs. Margaret E. Parsons, with whom he had his home till his death. He was of such a peculiarly amiable disposition, so even-tempered, so thoughtful of others and so helpful, that his loss is most deeply felt in the family, which is now small indeed, consisting of sister Parsons, her companion, sister Fanny Brittingham, and an afflicted brother. The affliction is most painful to our dear sister, who cared for him from a child, she the eldest and he the youngest of their family. In the community he was a great favorite. He was engaged in the grocery business for some years; afterwards he in connection with a friend started a county paper, *The Eastern Shoreman*, which became very popular.

The many brethren and sisters who have been entertained at sister Parson's house will remember his quiet, unassuming attention, and his care for their comfort. Though of a genial disposition, he was remarkably uncommunicative, seldom spoke of himself, and never complained. When any peculiarly afflicting sorrow or harassing trouble was on his mind he would be seen walking by himself and singing softly some such words as, "O to grace how great a debtor." When racked with pain he would exclaim, "Lord, have mercy upon me." What he felt of pain in body or sorrow of soul could only be partially known by the two or three most intimate with him, and that must be drawn from him by careful questioning. He had a fine poetic taste and talent, and wrote a number of poems, many of which were published in various periodicals. Some that I have read since his death most tenderly and touchingly express a desire after heavenly things, and a hope and confidence in the Lord. He manifested a solemn regard for sacred things, and for those whom he regarded as christians, and before his affliction I often saw him in our meetings when I was there.

He was a delicate child, and when about three years of age I am told that he would awake at night and say, "Talk about heaven." Such thoughts and desires occasionally expressed from childhood afford us reason to hope that the work of grace was begun in his heart, and that it has been performed until the day of Jesus Christ.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., April, 1888.

DIED—March 6, 1888, in Batavia, N. Y., **Mary Warren**, wife of John Warren, and daughter of Joel Keator. She died after

an illness of six days, aged forty-nine years. She never made any profession of her interest in the cause of the Redeemer, but the hymns that were presented as her favorites seem to give evidence that she had been taught of the Lord. She leaves a husband, father, two brothers and a number of other relatives to mourn her sudden departure. May the Lord sanctify the bereavement to the good of the relatives.

I was called to speak on the occasion to a large assembly, the text being 2 Samuel xiv. 14. Her favorite hymns (580 and 288, Beebe's Collection) were sung at the funeral.

ALSO,

DIED—On March 13, 1888, **Lydia Relf**, wife of William Relf, and mother of Elder David Earl, after a long and painful illness, something like dropsy. She said she did not fear to die. She did not make any profession of religion. I was called to preach on the occasion, and used the words recorded in Hebrews xi. 19, in Batavia, N. Y., to the relatives and neighbors. May the Lord sanctify the affliction of the bereaved to their good, and to his name be all the praise now and for ever. Amen.

I. HEWITT.

BROTHER **James Wade** was born October 30, 1808. **Elizabeth Reilly Wade** was born July 22, 1812. They were married March 4, 1830. Sister Wade departed this life May 8, 1878, aged sixty-five years, eight months and sixteen days. Brother Wade departed this life February 5, 1888, aged seventy-nine years, two months and eighteen days. Eleven children were the fruit of this union, five of them dying before their parents. Six children, a large number of grandchildren, with many brethren, sisters and friends are left to mourn, but not as those who have no hope, for we feel that our loss is their eternal gain. They are done with the troubles and sufferings of this world, and are gathered home with the redeemed gone before, to sing endless praises to the Redeemer.

Brother Wade obtained a good hope in Christ and joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Black's Creek, Madison County, Ga., Nov. 10, 1832, before the division. In that division he remained with the church, declaring nonfellowship for the institutions that caused the division. He was sound, contending for the old landmarks, dying in the full triumphs of faith through Jesus Christ the Redeemer.

Sister Wade obtained a good hope in Christ and united with the same church, being baptized by Elder George Lumpkin, July 16, 1849. She honored her profession, loving the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and died in the triumphs of faith.

The hope of the old brother and sister bore them up even in their afflictions, and in their last hours they were reconciled to the will of the Lord. They were kind parents, good citizens and neighbors. Their house was always a home for the brethren and friends, and they were ever ready to contribute to the necessities of the saints. It makes us sad to see their seats vacant, which they always filled unless providentially hindered. May we be enabled to follow in their footsteps, and may our last end be like theirs. May the good Lord comfort the bereaved children.

J. D. WILLIAMS.

FEBRUARY 17, 1888, at her home near Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., after a long and painful illness, **Mrs. Elizabeth A. Vandervort**, wife of Mr. John Vandervort, fell asleep in full assurance of a blessed immortality, aged about forty-five years. Although not a professed Old School Baptist, she manifested a warm regard for the doctrine and members of that church, and her genuine kindness will be

remembered by many who visited their pleasant home at the last session of the association at this place. Her bereaved husband, to whom she had been married scarcely five years, is left desolate indeed, and he and all the family have the sincere sympathy of a large circle of devoted friends in their great loss. May they be comforted by the divine power from whom alone true comfort can come.

APPOINTMENTS.

If the Lord will, I will attend appointments as follows:

- At Mt. Sterling, Ky., Tuesday p. m., April 24.
- At Mt. Carmel, Ky., Wednesday a. m., April 25.
- At Mt. Gilead, Ky., Thursday a. m., 26.
- At Mays Lick, Ky., Friday a. m., 27.
- At Little Flock, Ky., Sunday a. m., 29.
- At Georgetown, Ky., Tuesday a. m., May 1.
- At Elk Lick, Ky., Wednesday a. m., May 2.
- At Sardis, Ky., Friday a. m., May 4.
- At Mill Creek, Ohio (near Cincinnati), Saturday and Sunday a. m., May 5, 6.
- At New Castle, Ind. (as brother Cobble may arrange), Monday night, May 7.
- At Lebanon Ind. (near Elder J. A. Johnson's) Tuesday a. m., May 8.
- At Greenfield, Ind. (and vicinity, as brethren may arrange), Wednesday and Thursday, May 9, 10.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa.

RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

R Daughety 2 50, J A Harris 2, Rebecca Whitt 2, H R Littell 2 50, N C Yarbrough 5, John W Braswell 2, P B Reeves 13 50, Wm Jeffrees 2, J M Justice 2 50, Mrs F F Kabrick 3 50, F Pringle 2, Sarah A Brown 2 50, W C Lowe 2 50, Sadie Mellott 2, M R Rockett 4, W A J Steele 2 50, John Rackley 2.—Total \$55 00.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (16th), 1888, and continue the two following days.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

Those attending the association who come by way of Baltimore will take the train for Cockeyville on the Northern Central R. R. from Calvert Station at 3.30 p. m. on Tuesday, or from Union Station five minutes later. The train reaches Cockeyville at 4.15, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming down the Northern Central R. R. will reach Cockeyville about 4.30, and will also be met and cared for. We hope to meet many of our brethren at that time.

F. A. CHICK.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will hold her next annual session, if the Lord will, with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (23d), 1888, and continue until Friday evening following.

Those coming from the Eastern Shore will take train leaving Delmar at 4.20 p. m., on Tuesday. Get ticket for Wilson, on Delaware City R. R.

Those coming through Baltimore will take train leaving Baltimore about 3.00 p. m., on Tuesday. Ticket to Newark, Delaware.

Those coming from or through Philadelphia will take train leaving Broad Street Station at 5.00 p. m., on Tuesday. Ticket to Newark, Del.

There will be conveyances in waiting for those trains. All will be cared for

the very best we can. We hope many of the dear brethren and friends will be in attendance.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 30th), 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east will take train at the foot of Liberty Street, New York, at 1.30 p. m., on Tuesday, and come to Bethayres, on the Bound Brook R. R., where they will be met. A train leaving New York at 4.00 p. m. will be met for those not able to come earlier.

Those coming from other directions will take train at Third and Burk Streets depot, Philadelphia, at 4.00 p. m. Tuesday, and come to Southampton Station, where they will be met. Also, trains will be met on Wednesday at 10.20 a. m., at Southampton.

All lovers of the truth are affectionately invited to meet with us.

I. P. HELTINGS, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (6th), 1888, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

Brethren and friends coming east or west by the New York, Lake Erie & Western Rail Road will change cars at Greycourt, taking the Lehigh & Hudson River Rail Road to Warwick, where they will be met on Tuesday, on the arrival of the evening train, about seven o'clock. This train leaves New York City, foot of Chambers Street, about 4.00 p. m. The first train in the morning, Wednesday, both east and west, arrives at Warwick about 9.30, in time for the meeting.

Those who expect to return to New York will find it to their advantage to buy excursion tickets, good for thirty days. We hope to see many brethren and friends present.

WM. L. BEEBE, Pastor.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, if the Lord will, with the Charleston & Sullivan Church, in Tioga County, Pa., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (13th), 1888, and continue in session the two following days.

FOR the information of all who may wish to attend the Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon, for the year 1888, we will state that by an arrangement of the churches composing said association a change has been made in the time of holding the same. Therefore the 35th annual meeting of said association will be held with the Siloam Church, at Harmony School House, some three miles northeast of Mt. Angel, in Marion County, Oregon, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1888, worship to begin at 11 o'clock a. m.

Those coming on the Narrow Gauge R. R. will be met by brethren at Mt. Angel station with teams to convey them to the place of meeting.

All Old School or Primitive Baptists are cordially invited to attend our association and join with us in the solemn worship of the Lord our God.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.

E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with Columbia Church, at Kelly's Corners, Michigan, on Friday, June 8, 1888.

Those coming by way of Toledo will change at Union Depot for Napoleon,

Michigan, where they will be met. Those coming from the southwest will change cars at Hillsdale, Michigan, for Woodstock, which is near the place of meeting. All should take first morning train, Thursday, June 7th, to meet connection. A cordial invitation is extended, especially to ministering brethren.

J. P. CONAWAY.

### THREE DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a three days meeting of the Old School or Primitive Baptists held with the Sidling Hill Church, in Fulton County, Pa., to commence on Friday before the first Sunday in May, 1888. A general invitation is given to any of our faith and order who may feel in their hearts to visit us, as we are destitute of ministers. Elder E. V. White, of Virginia, is serving us as pastor.

Those visiting us by railway will have to come on the Baltimore & Ohio Rail Road to Hancock, Md., on Thursday, where they will be met and conveyed to the place of the meeting, a distance of about twenty miles.

Those wishing to come will please write and give timely notice to Ahimaz Mellott, or Dennis Mellott, or Jacob F. Garland. The post office address of all the above brethren is Needmore, Fulton Co., Pa. AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THERE will be a three days meeting held with the Broad Run Church, Montgomery County, Md., commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in May. All persons coming on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. will be met at Barnesville station on Friday before. Trains leave Washington City about 8.30 a. m., and 4.30 and 5.30 p. m. The morning train is best to take, as it is six to eight miles from the depot to the residences of our brethren. We earnestly invite ministers, brethren and friends to come.

E. V. WHITE.

### MARY PARKER'S LETTERS.

"Collection of Gems," or Letters written by Mary Parker, are now ready for sale. The size of the book is five by eight inches, material and binding first class. Prices—bound in cloth, 75c per copy. Paper Binding 60c. Those ordering by mail will send eight cents additional for postage. Send money orders on Lancaster post office, Registered Letter, Postal Note, U. S. Money Order, or any safe way. Postage stamps not desired. Address all orders to

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PLEASANTVILLE, Fairfield Co., Ohio.

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This is a very interesting and comforting book to all Old School Baptists, written by sister Kate Swartout. It contains 304 pages, printed in large type. Price, single copy 75c; per dozen, by express, \$7.00. Send draft, money order, or registered letter, to Mrs. Andrew J. Swartout, Woodstock, Lenawee County, Michigan; but money orders must be made payable at Brooklyn, Michigan.

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Our subscribers will confer a favor on us, and enable us to keep their accounts with more accuracy, by observing the following instructions:

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1888.

NO. 10.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

BLANCO, Texas, Feb., 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Over the signature of Sylvester Hassell, in the January number of the *Gospel Messenger*, there are some seeming inconsistencies, and to my mind impugn the perfections of God, to which I will briefly allude. In doing so I will try to observe the rule or advice that he gives in conducting matters of controversy; that is, to regard truth as the noblest of ends, and earnestly strive to divest myself of prejudice, partiality or prepossession, and resolve fearlessly, unfalteringly and perseveringly to follow truth as far as divinely enabled, and recognize the fact that owing to our corrupt and darkened condition we cannot attain to the truth in all its divine fullness; that humility is the highest mark or evidence of either worldly or spiritual wisdom; that the Scriptures are the only standard of truth, and all the reasoning of uninspired men to the contrary is less than nothing, and vanity; that the real question is not what any confession of faith, periodical, book, or uninspired writer or speaker says upon the subject, but alone what the Scriptures declare. Now, I wish it distinctly understood that I do not write in view of notoriety or prominence, nor to provoke controversy, but to bear a humble part in vindication of the honor of my Maker; for this I hold in higher esteem than all things else combined. When the brother says that one class of Scripture bears upon one aspect of predestination, and another class upon another aspect of that subject, are we to understand that there is want of coincidence in these two aspects of predestination itself? or is there a want of harmony in the Scriptures that teach both these branches of predestination? It would seem that if there are two aspects of predestination, there must necessarily be two aspects of Scripture teaching. Certainly the term "aspect" would not have been used if it had not to the author's mind implied a difference or a contrariety, both in predestination itself and the Scriptures that teach it; and this is plainly implied in the following language, "If one class of Scripture passages bears upon one aspect of the subject of predestination, and another class of Scripture passages bears upon another aspect of that subject, we have no right to receive the one class and reject the other, but are bound to receive both as

equally divine and eternally true." Right here I fail to see the propriety, or even the possibility, of receiving the brother's advice or teaching; for if in the two aspects of predestination, one aspect points one way, and the other a contrary way, to save my life I cannot believe both at one time. So it would take us both to believe it all; for I, nor any other man, can really believe all the parts of any proposition, any further than we can discern their harmony with that proposition. 'As God is not divided in his essence, so there is perfect congruity in his perfections, and in all those acts of his, of which predestination is one. Thus his predestination is peremptory, without any countervailing agency whatever, and will be fully accomplished in and upon every creature to which he has given being. The brother quotes from Paul, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," and says, "We have need of not only a part, but of all the Scriptures, otherwise they would not all have been given." Very true. And as they were all given by inspiration, they are all in perfect harmony; so that if any portion of inspiration teaches the doctrine of absolute and universal predestination, all other portions are (instead of any portion teaching otherwise) in perfect harmony. For as Creator, God created all things that have being. As predestinator, he appoints all things to some certain use, and directs them to some determinate end; and by the unceasing agency of his providence he accomplishes neither more nor less than he predestinated, by means of his own choice, which were no less appointed than the end.

The brother says, "The first class of texts bears upon the truth of God's predestination of all things;" and then says, "Whether the infinitely free, sovereign, wise and powerful Creator, who knows the end from the beginning, and who created all things out of nothing, did from eternity foreordain all the consequences of his creative work, all the events in the universe, in the light of the Scriptures this question answers itself." He then quotes a long catalogue of texts in support of the doctrine of universal predestination, as I suppose; for after quoting those texts he says, "I must confess that I am convinced by these Scripture passages (as I have said on the 485th page of the Church History) that in one sense God has predestinated or foreordained all things; without him

they never would have been created; without him they would not be sustained for a moment. If God is omniscient and omnipotent, and existed alone from eternity, and created all things out of nothing, and disposed of all things in his providence, with all the surrounding circumstances, exactly foreknowing all the results, then certainly, in one sense, his foreknowledge is equivalent to his foreordination of all things, including the volitions of his creatures, yet without the slightest degree of sin on his part." The language just quoted is a pretty good confession of faith, to which, if the author will strike out that short clause, "in one sense," I will subscribe heart and hand. What the brother says about the meaning of some texts in their original, I know nothing, but am willing to abide by the King James translation, believing it to be the best we have or can get in this day of religious strife; yet owing to human frailty it may have some defects. I do not think the brother need have any fears as to any exigence of circumstances involving the horrid idea of our God sinning, as implied in the close of his confession of faith alluded to above; for God is not, nor ever was, under any law, and sin is the transgression of law. God's will is his only rule, which will is perfect rectitude; therefore whatever he does in pursuance of that will is right, even to the indiscriminate destruction of men and women, and making some vessels to honor and some to dishonor; for who hath or can resist his will?

But the brother says there is another class of Scripture passages in regard to God's predestination of sin, just as inspired and truthful as the first, which we have no more right to reject than the others. After quoting those texts, without explaining or showing wherein they differ from the first, he changes his confession somewhat, for he says, "These Scriptures thoroughly satisfy me that God is as holy as he is sovereign; infinitely and eternally holy, not only in his will and law, but in his essence and nature; that holiness is not an arbitrary creature of the divine will, but a fundamental and changeless attribute of the divine nature, of which his holy will is but the expression; that sin proceeds not from God, but from the creature; that God neither causes sin nor approves it, but only permits," &c.; "that God's predestination of sin was not of a compulsive, but of a permissive, directive,

restrictive and overruling character." I can heartily subscribe to the first part of this last confession, but without further light I cannot subscribe to it in a consolidated form; and yet I accept the advice of the brother, and receive the latter quoted Scripture with the same reverence as the first; for I utterly fail to see any discrepancy between the two classes of texts, as is seemingly implied in the whole tenor of the brother's language in reference to them. But waiving a review of the Scriptures quoted by the brother, as I wish to be concise, I will put, for the consideration of brethren, some pertinent questions. Was the will of God in any sense engaged in the entrance and reign of sin in the world? If so, what is the difference, as to his connection with it, between an absolute decree, with all the appointed agencies in order to it, or a permissive decree, wherein it seems to be supposed that God would avoid the charge of guilt as being the author of sin? But if his will is engaged in the so-called permissive decree, and is just as certain of accomplishment as though the decree was absolute, I wish to know if God would be more liable to the charge of guilt, were such a thing possible, in one case than the other. And would it not be more consonant with just views of an omnipotent and sovereign God to conclude, as the Scriptures teach, that his will and decrees are sovereign and independent, than to suppose that he hides or shields his acts behind what are called second causes? Or are we to suppose that the high and lofty God that inhabits eternity was entirely passive while this greatest of trans-actions was being enacted, as it issued in the fall, misery and death of the race of man? Though he takes charge of sparrows and the hairs of our heads, so that a sparrow cannot fall to the ground nor a hair from its pore without him who preserves the stars in their orbits and directs them in their circuits, and the pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof; and so awfully grand and majestic was the display of his glory in creation that the stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy. Again, how would God's permissive decree consist with his sovereignty and independence, as it is insisted that this permissive decree is executed by extraneous agencies? Again, is not the idea of an independent creature a palpable contradiction of the relation subsisting between Creator and

creature? If every action is performed by power, and all power resides in God, can any act, whether good or evil, be performed without power derived from him? Is it reasonable to suppose that an all-wise God would grant power to be exercised otherwise than in the accomplishment of his will and purpose? Is there any discrepancy between the divine predestination and foreknowledge? Can his prescience be infallibly certain only as founded upon his predestination? Are God's predestination and providence unisons? In other words, does he by the incessant agency of his providence accomplish in time what he predestinated in eternity, and no more? Or does his jurisdiction extend to the utmost extent of his dominion, seeing he does as seemeth him good in heaven and earth, in the sea and all deep places, and does according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? That is, have any a right to say that it would not be just for him to do this or that, or as he pleases? Again, upon the permissive plan, did the entrance and reign of sin form any part of God's original plan of government over his creatures? If not, how do we account for the eternal covenant plan of salvation as founded on the fallen and miserable state of God's elect? Is it not a self-evident fact that to the extent we would have the creature independent, we would have the Creator dependent? Now, if all these queries are answered affirmatively (though few among others that might be put), does it not necessarily follow that the doctrine of permissive decrees, and the cavil founded upon it as to God's conduct toward his creatures, falls to the ground?

The brother further says that sin originates in the will of the creature, and not in the will of God; that men are voluntary in the commission of sin, and therefore accountable and justly punishable for their sins; and then says, "This is the view [though all human teaching not in accord with the divine testimony is to be rejected as vanity] of predestination held by all the Baptists, and by, I suppose, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of all the predestinarians of former centuries, and, I believe, by nine-tenths of the Primitive Baptists of the present century. It is precisely the view of the Westminster and London Confessions of Faith;" the former Presbyterian, the latter Baptist; from which latter he quotes lengthily. After devoting sufficient space to fill sixteen pages of the *Messenger*, he finally, in the wind-up, defines the meaning of "author," which runs thus: "One who makes to grow or increase, originator, beginner, former, producer, creator, first cause, first mover, efficient cause." The brother says it is certain that when brethren say that God is not the author of sin,

they say, in short, that the creature is in the sense of the above definition. As to what the overwhelming proportion of Baptists and others of former ages, or Baptists of the present time, held or hold, in common with what the brother has published in the *Messenger*, I reject, as not being in accord with the divine testimony; and according to his advice, and my promise at the outset, I appeal from the decisions of men and numbers to the divine standard.

Though I do not want, as the Lord knows, to reflect on any supposed blunders of the brother, yet it does seem to me that to believe all he says as to the authorship of the creature, we would have to believe the doctrine of transubstantiation, as also that of transposition, that is, that the creature is transformed into a creator. As God's act is supposed to be conditioned upon the act of this creator, he must necessarily change places with him; for in such an exigence as this the creature would be the independent actor, and his creator the dependent actor. Sift the matter as you will, to the very extent you suppose the creature to act independent of his Maker, to that extent it would be reasonable to suppose the Creator's acts following as a consequence would be dependent, as being founded on the act of the creature; and thus comes in the idea of transposition, or change of places. Whether the action performed be good or evil, if the act of God follows upon it, in either case his independence and sovereignty are equally impugned. The idea of an independent creature (though impossible) is absolutely necessary to the independence of his acts, and would be subversive of the relative position of Creator and creature. The independence of the creature seems strongly implied in what the brother further says, that is, "In no other way is it possible for us to conceive how the creature can be responsible and justly punishable for his sins." In the first place, the grounds of his responsibility are deeply laid in the immutable will and sovereign pleasure of his Creator, and manifested in creating and forming one man and his race in him, and enduing him with such qualities, physical and mental, and with him his race that were to succeed him, as would answer the ends of his moral government in the world; to whom and race he gave a law or commandment, and surrounded him with such circumstances as led to his fall and condemnation, and his posterity with him. Now, if he had not been responsible and accountable to his Maker in his creation, why give him a law and require his conformity to it? Why put him in the garden to dress and keep it? Why form such a union between him and Eve that nothing but death could sever it? Why admit the serpent into the garden? Why clothe the trees with such properties that made them desirable, and furnish Eve with

such qualities that she could both behold with delight and desire this delicious fruit? To the reflecting mind does it not seem that Adam was just as responsible to his Maker at the very dawn of his creation as ever afterward? The relation of Creator and creature involves the idea of responsibility; and as such, and not otherwise, God gave him and his race a law. So the relation, as to accountability, has not changed in the least since the fall and sinful state of man. When the brother says that we cannot conceive of man's responsibility otherwise than in the way he has prescribed, the language supposes that Adam should have been so constituted as to be fully able to keep the law, or it would not be equitable or just in God to hold him accountable. If we can suppose that God's conduct would be unjust in this instance, why not in other unnumbered instances? Why not suppose that he should have endued Adam and Eve, not only with absolute liberty of will, but also with perfect rectitude of character, so that they would have withstood the seductions of Satan, who is a creature of God, and as dependent as any other creature? And we might say that he ought to have made us angels instead of men. Thus we might advance till we reached the perfection of God, were it possible. But after running into this channel, where will the stream empty? Who can strike a line this side of omnipotence? As I advance in this examination the field widens and evidence increases; but I must desist for the present. For testimony in proof of what I have written, I refer to the whole volume of the inspired word, for the whole of its teaching, to my mind, is in perfect accord with the doctrine of absolute and universal predestination; not only where the term is used, but the doctrine is as fully and clearly taught by the Scriptures where the term is not used. I heartily indorse what brother Hassell says as to difference on this subject breaking fellowship among brethren, for I have as good brethren whom I hold in high esteem that differ with me on this subject as others. I am individually responsible for what this contains.

Your brother in gospel bonds,  
JAMES WAGNER.

NEW CHURCH, Va., March 14, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—After finishing the business part of my letter, I feel inclined this morning to pen a few thoughts for the columns of the *SIGNS*, providing it meets your approval. I have been a subscriber to and an agent for the *SIGNS* for a number of years; but how little has been produced by my pen to show my approval or appreciation of the matter it has contained. Yet you may rest assured, my dear brethren, that it has not been because of any lack of either, but for lack of confidence in my ability to produce anything

that would even tend to establish the truth that has been written by others, much less add to its lustre. I have been surprised that so many seemingly good Baptists could get along satisfied without such a precious visitor as the *SIGNS*, for it brings right to our firesides what we are glad sometimes to travel through various kinds of weather and disadvantages to hear, and then consider it a high privilege. O that I could stir up the pure minds of many to act at once for their spiritual comfort by subscribing for the *SIGNS*, for I feel sure it would be the best laid out two dollars if they have any hungering and thirsting after the truth. How sorry I am to witness what I do at so many Baptist houses, quite a quantity of common newspapers, while neither the picture of Elder G. Beebe nor a copy of the *SIGNS OF THE TIMES* can be found about the house. How strange this is. It forms a question that I cannot solve, that so much good, comforting and instructive matter should be brought within such easy range, and then so many refuse it. I call it a refusal. But I suppose that Israel of old acted contrary to their best interests, and I suppose it is possible for Israel of the present time to do the same.

Now I would like to pen a few thoughts upon the subject of the new birth; and I am sure that if every one of God's people knew my feelings, not one would object to my having a small space in the columns of the *SIGNS* for this purpose, for I do it with the best of feelings to every one who has written on the subject. I do not think a particle less of a brother because we do not see these points alike, providing he does not become a railer.

The way I will introduce this matter is, What or who is it that is born again? I am so ignorant that when the word is given so plainly, with the definition to it, I have no disposition to change its position. Now it does look to me that when the Lord said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again," he meant what he said. Now what man was it? seems to be the question with some. But it is not a question in the Scriptures, for that is settled. Mark you, he did not say, Except the man, the new man, &c., because there is only one new man; but "a man," any man, Nicodemus, Zaccheus, Saul of Tarsus, or any other, "be born again." For Jesus defined his meaning by telling him that he meant him, and not some other man in him. And without this birth he (the same man that must be born) cannot see the kingdom of God. Will any person please answer this question? When was the time when the Spirit, or new man, could not see the kingdom of God? Could there be such a thing? If not, then he meant Nicodemus, and not the new man in him. I cannot see the consistency of emphasizing the sixth verse so much, for the purpose of smothering what follows right on in the seventh verse, "Marvel not

that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Did he not mean Nicodemus? What is it to be born? Is it not to bring out of obscurity? The foundation of God standeth sure, and the Lord knoweth them that are his. But who else in all the world does know? Saul of Tarsus was an heir according to the promise of God when he was persecuting the church; but was he not obscure to all human wisdom? Certainly he was. But after God had given him (the same Saul) life, by the power of his own word, he now, by the Spirit which he had received from above, comforted them which he before persecuted. So it takes the Spirit and the man to make one "born again." Then the Spirit is simply the life, by which the character is known. For Paul says to the church at Rome, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans viii. 14. Who are the sons of God? Why, the men that are led by the Spirit of God. Then they are born of God, and are known as such by the Scriptures. When was the Spirit, or new man, born, in order to make it "again" when the sinner is affected by it? "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her."—Psalm lxxxvii. 5. This certainly means more than one; and the new man, or Spirit, is but one. "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Peter ii. 2. The word "ye," where does it apply? To the new man? That does not need any growth. That is perfect already. But the apostle defines the matter: it is them that have "tasted that the Lord is gracious."—Verse 3. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."—1 Peter i. 23. Reading from the eighteenth verse down to the twenty-third ought to convince any one who he meant was born again. "Forasmuch," says he, "as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation," &c. The new man? No; because there is nothing vain in the new man. The same "ye" appears in the twenty-second verse. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit." Not the Spirit, or new man, has purified its soul. "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again," &c. This is the effect or outgrowth, not of corruptible seed, as the first birth, but of incorruptible seed, by which they were elemented to all these things. The apostle does not say that the seed is born again, nor that the word is born again, but "strangers scattered," sinners of Adam's fallen race. They are born of the seed, and by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The seed is the life. The Spirit, or new man, is really the eyes, as well as the life, and it is through these that the sinner born again sees. Where can we find the new man except by the outward de-

monstrations amongst men? Faith is also received by the new birth, the hand by which they who are born again lay hold upon the promises of the gospel. Paul calls it our life. It takes all these graces to prove that one is born again. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear." Whose life? The one that is born again. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." Without these things we cannot find a child of God. Paul calls himself, "I myself." "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Is one ever affected in this way before he is born again? "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope." Who was it that the apostle meant, that God had begotten again to a lively hope? Was it the new man, or the saints scattered? The position taken of late by some looks very much like presenting a church of disembodied spirits.

Another question, and I am done. What must be converted and become as a little child? Who is it that must receive the kingdom of God as a little child, or he cannot enter therein?

The few hints that I have given will show to whoever may read them what my views are upon the new birth. I want to say to the readers of the SIGNS that I heartily indorse the views of Elders Purington, Chick, and a number of others, on the absolute predestination of all things. I think the times require that all who minister in word and doctrine should show their position; for this is the doctrine of the Bible, and distinguishes Bible Baptists from the whole brood of antichrist, by whatever name they may be called. I recommend also the turning away from all railers, providing it is not done too hastily. I want to say in conclusion that there never has been a time when the editorials were as precious to me as now, and have been for some time. Dear brethren, if you think this is not too imperfect, you may give it a place in the SIGNS.

T. M. POULSON.

SOUTHAMPTON, PA., Nov. 9, 1887.

MY DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS:—I have been impressed for some time to write and tell you some of the way in which I have been led of late, and it seems that I cannot get it off my mind. I feel like praising the Lord for his many blessings bestowed upon me in the year that is about to pass away. It seems to me that of all creatures I should be the most thankful. I have been brought very low in sickness, and seemed nigh unto death. But for some reason I am spared, and am a monument of mercy. In the first part of my sickness I felt to rebel against God's providence, being impatient. But O how I longed for sub-

mission to his will. I had a relapse, and was very much worse than at first. But O what a change there was! I felt to say from my heart, as I trust, Thy will, O Lord, be done. My prayer had been that I might be submissive, and it was granted. I cannot begin to tell you all the sweet portions of Scripture that came to me while I lay on my bed, to cheer me by the way; and also the beautiful hymns. I found myself very often singing from the heart, although I could not sing aloud. The rapturous height of that holy delight was such that I could not find words to express. Our dear pastor, Elder Durand, and many of the dear brethren and sisters, often came to see me, and they all seemed so Christ-like. It seemed that all the things of earth had lost their charms to me, and I wanted to hear the name of Jesus. Not long since I awoke in the night repeating the words,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer's ear."

I felt like singing the words while on my bed. It is still very precious to me; yes, the name of Jesus will swell every song in eternity. But just think how much of our time is spent in vanity. I feel, for one, so prone to wander from the God I profess to love, and am often so cold, so forgetful of the many blessings bestowed upon me, I often wonder how it is with me. Am I what I profess to be? But if I know my own heart, I do love the dear saints, and love their company.

Dearly beloved, I feel that I am just talking with my own family, and I hope you will bear with me if I ramble. I feel sometimes as did a dear old sister that I heard talking to-day, who said that at one time she was very sick, and her pastor came to see her; but she could not ask him to speak in prayer for her, for she felt that she needed nothing. She had all she needed then and had nothing to ask for. And I do feel at this time that it is enough. If Jesus is mine, then I have all my heart can crave. I feel that he has been very kind to me, and I feel that he will give me each day as I need.

As you will see, I began this letter on the ninth day of November, and now it is the seventeenth. I feel that I must finish it; but in looking it over I feel it is so imperfect that it is hardly worth sending for publication. But the first part of it is just as I felt at that time, and I do not suppose I could do any better if I had it to do over.

This Sunday morning I am at home. God in his providence has ordered it so that I cannot go to meeting to-day. And

"While I know his providence  
Disposes each event,  
Shall I judge by feeble sense,  
And yield to discontent?"

"If he shed his precious blood  
To bring me to his fold,  
Can I think that meaner good  
He ever will withhold?"

I feel that I can trust him. I feel

that he has brought me through many fears and straits, and my soul waits on his salvation. May I ever feel to take the cup of salvation and call on the Lord. Surely he is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? When we faint and cannot walk, he bears us in his arms. But, dearly beloved, I feel that it is good for us to be in the valley of humiliation, to teach us our dependence on God. If we are weary, he says to us, Come unto me, and I will give you rest. What a subject is this to talk or write upon. It can never be exhausted. It is an old story, yet ever new, and a sweet theme to dwell on. I cannot express the holy delight that fills my soul at times while reading in the SIGNS the letters from the dear brethren and sisters. Though I may never have seen them in the flesh, my love goes out to them, and I feel that I am talking to them while reading. Sometimes my hope seems very small; but when I think of the Scripture, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," I feel encouraged. Not long since I was at a meeting when the number was few, but it seemed that the house was filled with the Holy Ghost, as one spoke and said, "Where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst." I do think he was in the midst, and that to bless. I felt that it was a heavenly place in Christ Jesus. As a church, I feel that we are blessed indeed, having one as a pastor who preaches Christ as all in all; pointing us to him alone from whom salvation flows.

I feel that I might say more, but lest I weary the reader I will close, with love to all the dear saints.

Your sister in hope.

RACHEL F. HART.

MONTICELLO, Ark., March 1, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been acquainted with the SIGNS for the last fifteen years, and so far as I have been able to discern I have believed the doctrine it contends for, or at least since the year 1877. We are now living where some will not have the doctrinal sentiments of the SIGNS. Not many months ago I heard an Old Baptist preacher say in his discourse that "absolute predestination" would not do to preach. He took for his text, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." He made that doctrine to be the "wild gourds." In his closing remarks he said that if he believed in the doctrine of absolute predestination he would not care what he did; that it is a dangerous doctrine, and was the cause of much coldness in the church. I remarked to him, after he had closed, that nine out of every ten persons would say, that if they believed in election and predestination they would not care what they did. Now as to whether the old brother spoke thoughtlessly or honestly believed such, I do not know; but I feel confident that the assertion was without the guidance of the Spirit of inspiration. I do not

feel that it is necessary for me to say what I believe. Yourselves, brethren Durand and Wagner, with many others, have expressed the sentiments of many good, sound brethren here, and some of our preaching brethren are not ashamed to declare the same, regardless of what the world shall think or say. For a brother to believe that his preaching quickens or awakens sinners dead in trespasses and sins, is to be about ready to become a modern missionary. But one will say (for the carnal mind always does), What is the use of preaching, if all are either saved or damned already? The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." Then it is not to make them believe. They must first be given eyes to see and a heart to understand. They must be made alive before they can believe.

I will send you an account of some of my travels, and if you see fit you may publish the same.

I was born in the year 1856, in Fulton County, Mississippi, and was raised by a Methodist mother, who was the daughter of a Methodist minister. My first recollection of her teaching was when I was seven or eight years old. She told us that if we would not tell any more falsehoods the Lord would forgive us those we had already told. Time after time I formed resolutions that I would do as she had said; but I could not be a good boy for one day, according to my own judgment. And if I could have succeeded in doing what I was taught to do, I could not have erased from my conscience that which I had already done. An individual's conscience is never released from the thought of sin until the Lord separates his sins from him, as far as the east is from the west.

From that time until I was twenty years old I was promising that I would reform and get religion. I had always set my stake a year ahead, but when the time I had appointed came I was no more willing than at the first. But in October, 1871, the Lord showed me that I was a sinner. For several years I had seen that there was need for my doing differently from what I had. Time after time I have raised my head as high as I could, and sworn to the living God, with tears in my eyes, that if I did not do better I hoped he would kill me when I broke my promise. I will say that I never kept one promise, out of the thousand I have made to the Lord. I was made to see that it would take as many promises, before I ever would keep one, as it would require spider webs stretched before a locomotive to stop it. I do believe a train of cars could be so clogged that it could not move, but I do not believe that man can do anything that would merit his acceptance with God. But when the time came that the Lord showed me what I was, I felt that I could willingly have exchanged places with the brutes, as they would not have to give account for sin. I was made to feel that there was not a pit in hell

sufficient for me. While under that great burden of sin it seemed to me that if I could cry I would get relief. The Lord granted me everything I thought would relieve me, but all failed, and my trouble only got worse. I gave up all hope of ever getting relief, feeling that I had committed the unpardonable sin, and that my day of grace had passed, and I was made to pass condemnation upon myself. At an unexpected moment, instead of begging for mercy, I was praising the Lord for what he had done for me. This Scripture came to me, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." My experience of those hours is beyond language to express. I now felt that my days of trouble were over, and that the few remaining days I had on earth to spend would be spent in praise to my Savior. For four or five weeks it seemed like the sweetest part of my life, before or since. It seemed like I felt submissive to the will of God, in joy or in trouble. But the time came when I desired to see one of those days, but did not see it. But that state of life where one has no doubts, but all is sunshine, does not belong to those who feel that they have no abiding city here, but are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Yet how often do we find ourselves (more especially the young) boasting to ourselves, while the promises are sweet and clear to us, that we will never get so low in our feelings but what we shall take courage and consolation in those promises. I will relate one of the many circumstances that occurred with myself. In the fall of 1880 I had been to our association, the New Hope, in northeast Mississippi, and had returned home rejoicing, so bright appeared the promises, and so free from doubts was I at the time. During that time the Lord showed me the way and plan of salvation to his elect, and how just he was in their salvation, and how sure the promises were to them. I was alone in the woods at the time, looking after oxen. I was made to rejoice with exceeding great joy. The time was very sweet to me. My night of doubts and fears had passed, and the Sun of righteousness had arisen with healing in his wings. I boasted to myself on the following morning, while on the same business above named, that I never would doubt any more, that the night never would become so dark but what I would find some comfort and consolation in those blessed promises. While in this frame of mind, all at once, and before I was aware, my light went out, and I could hardly have told my name; and so far from claiming a promise, I could no more have done so than I could have made darkness light. For days and months it seemed nothing but perpetual darkness with me. But, dear brethren, it has been so with me that when it has pleased the good Lord for me to pass through

fiery trials, he has sent as a forerunner his sealing Spirit, to comfort and prepare my soul for such trial. In the spring of 1882 I passed through hard and severe trials, two of the heaviest ones, and was blessed before each with the sealing Spirit, which sealed to my poor soul the sweet promises of the Savior. When these two passed over me I was made to dread them. While the Spirit was willing, the flesh was weak. It seemed like I preferred darkness, and less spiritual blessings. Such is man; and if left to himself, he would never retain God in his mind. I am one that believes man cannot do anything to merit salvation; that all his works, from first to last, only condemn him continually. All that is found in man acceptable is the imputed righteousness of Christ.

God's people pass through many trials and temptations. He that has become dead indeed unto sin, and been made alive to righteousness, knows that God will not look upon sin with allowance. And if the tempter suggests to him to do this, or to do that, because God is a merciful God and will forgive sin, he will learn from sad experience that God is not mocked. The unworthy writer has passed through such, to his own shame and condemnation. Therefore I do not believe that God's children would any more serve sin if they believed in Universalism, than I believe that the wicked will do righteousness. Yet with their flesh the children of God serve the law of sin. There are some in the world who are called "self-willed," and such characters establish their own righteousness, and reject the righteousness of Christ. But those who have no confidence in the flesh do not know what they would do; for often do they promise themselves that they will not do this or that, and that they will do this and that; but before they are aware they have broken their promises. They are daily debtors to grace, and are made to say with Paul, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" If Paul had been blessed of the Lord so as not to have been cast into great perils, doubts and fears, he would not have been a comfort to us poor wretches in these trying times. But we believe the saints are all led by the same Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is not received by the world; but if any come in their own name, boasting of their own righteousness, the world will run after them, for it loves its own. Satan has never devised anything but what the world has shown by its actions that it loves it.

Not wishing to weary your patience, nor to crowd out better matter, I will close. I feel assured that God will keep his own unto the end, and bring them off more than conquerors through him that loved them.

I subscribe myself an unworthy brother, if one at all,

JAMES H. BLYTHE.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., April, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have read with no little astonishment the communication of Elder S. H. Durand in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for April 15th, current volume, in which he says, "I regard the sentiments expressed in my article, published in the SIGNS of January 15th, as in accordance with the doctrine uniformly maintained by the Licking Association." As a humble member of the Licking Association, and pastor of four churches in her body (three of which were served so long by the late Elder T. P. Dudley, and in one of those churches he held his membership from the time he professed religion to the day of his death, which church has never had but three pastors, and was constituted over one hundred years ago), I will ask space in the columns of the SIGNS, that I may state that neither I, nor one single member of either of the three churches (so far as I am aware) served so long by Elder Dudley, regards Elder Durand's communication in the same light that he regards it. I say this in all kindness, and do hope that no one will regard this positive declaration as uttered in a spirit of harshness, for nothing is more foreign to my mind or feeling. It is too well known by brethren generally of Licking Association that the very sentiments expressed in Elder Durand's communication in the January 15th number are the sentiments that led off a party from the Licking Association years ago; and as a proof of this I wish here to make a quotation from Elder Johnson's writings, found near the bottom of page 416: "Am I right that Christ and these children came alike from God, that they are not of this world, even as he is not of this world; that they are and were partakers of flesh and blood, in the same manner, in like manner? If the children of the earthly Adam were regenerated in Christ, and then born of him, who is the incorruptible seed, would it not involve the idea that the Adamic man is 'born over again,' as some who have gone out from us have affirmed? And, if the spiritual children of God were 'put forth in Adam,' as some say, would it not involve the idea that he was to some extent at least spiritual, and not natural?" I ask, Does not Elder Durand's sentiment involve the same idea now? For if, as Elder D. says, "we are to understand from the language of Jesus that the one who cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again is the natural man, born of the flesh," must not that natural man, born of the flesh, have pre-existed in the Lord Jesus Christ before time began? For in the morning light of time the great Architect of all worlds, as well as of our being, began to make a grand display of a revelation of himself in every herb, plant, the grass of the field, the trees, the different fishes that abound in the waters, together with every beast that roams, crown-

ing all the work of his creation by the formation of man, fructifying each and all as a seed within itself, yielding seed and fruit after his kind. This is the doctrine that we have ever maintained; and also that the saints—Paul the apostle, the saints at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus, the children of God, who are partakers of flesh and blood, in their manifestation in time, in their earthly pilgrimage, are composed of two whole and distinct natures, whose paternity is as different as the realms of immortal light and the regions of eternal darkness. That this view of the subject is in harmony with the sentiment entertained by the late venerable pastor of three of the churches that I now serve as pastor, and radically different from those expressed by Elder Durand in several of his last communications on the subject of the spiritual birth, I wish here to make a few quotations from his (Elder Dudley's) writings, to show how he regarded the "again birth." I shall then closet his communication, as I am not writing with the view of, nor do I intend, entering into a controversy with Elder Durand upon this subject; nor would I write at this time, only that Elder Durand has referred to the doctrine uniformly maintained by Licking Association. I now quote from Elder Dudley, in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, volume xxxix., number 3:

"The natural man is the product of a natural seed. His feelings, susceptibilities, hopes, desires, enjoyments, are altogether earthly; but is this true with regard to that other man whom the apostle designates when he says, 'The new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness?' Whence his paternity? 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.' Now it is most evident that if the 'new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,' if he is 'born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible,' he must be something entirely different from the earthly Adam. The whole spiritual man is as emphatically born of the Spirit as the whole natural man is born of the flesh; and these two men are the parties engaged in the christian warfare." "But what is a birth? The development or bringing forth of something which absolutely existed in embryo before its development. Now will Elder White take the position that that part of man that he supposes to be born again existed in embryo both in Adam and in Christ? If it did not, it could not so be born."

Surely I cannot find the Scripture that the natural man born of the flesh existed in embryo in the Lord Jesus Christ before the world began. If so, in what sense is he or has he been preserved? "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." I again

quote from the pen of Elder Dudley, SIGNS OF THE TIMES, volume xxxvi., number 10:

"I have ever conceived that the corn of wheat, which falls into the ground and dies, contains within its germ everything, and nothing more, that will spring up and grow out of it. Now I ask, Was anything born of that incorruptible seed which was not in the germ? Was the natural seed deposited in Christ? I think brethren will answer each of these questions in the negative. How then can they contend that some part (for I have not met with one who contends that the entire Adamic man) of the old man is born of God?"

I will again make a quotation from the writings of Elder J. F. Johnson, to show the harmony of these two lamented and highly esteemed sires in Israel, pages 434 and 435:

"Besides, to deny this position will lead us into inextricable difficulty in harmonizing the Scriptures. One may believe that the soul is born of God; and if that is the case, and we sin afterward, we must sin without a soul, for that cannot sin if such be the fact. Another, that it is the mind. Can we sin without a mind? A third, that it is the whole natural man. If so, he is no more flesh, but spirit, like his Father." Elder Durand says, "We are to understand the language of Jesus that the one who cannot see the kingdom of God except he be born again is the natural man, born of the flesh." Elder Johnson says, page 209, "Instead, then, of making these two words, 'born again,' the whole 'bane of contention,' let us go to Christ's own explanation of the subject, and try there to get the mists and fog driven from our eyes, so that we may see the matter as it is. The explanatory part of the subject is this: 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.'"

Brethren, I feel that the foregoing extracts from the writings of Elders Dudley and Johnson are sufficient to show how they regarded the "again birth," and what was the product of that birth; and now, in conclusion, let us consider, if it is the natural man, born of the flesh, that is born again, born of the Spirit, born from above, born of God, would it not sweep with one fell stroke from the word of inspiration the doctrine of adoption, and also the necessity of atonement? For surely nothing corruptible or unholy can be found in the product of that which is born of the incorruptible or holy seed, the seed of the righteous.

I wish it distinctly understood that I have not referred to the writings of Elders Dudley and Johnson as authority, and agree with my brethren that the inspired record is the only rule of faith and practice for the saints in all ages. May the Lord guide us all in wisdom's way, and enable us to labor for those things that make for peace, is the sincere desire of your brother in hope of life and immortality,

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

STATE ROAD, Del., April 25, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I recently received a letter from a distant sister in the church, informing me of some agitation among the Baptists of a question in regard to the bread proper to be used at the sacrament, and earnestly requesting me to write on the subject for the SIGNS. I will say in the first place that as a general thing I have felt to regret the prevailing disposition to start some question in regard to our doctrine or order, and agitate it until more or less confusion and strife are produced. If the inquiry was always after the order and practice of the primitive churches, a sincere desire to know the truth and to walk in it, there could of course be no objection to such inquiry; but when some one challenges the general practice of sound, orderly churches on some point, and sets up his own judgment as the guide in introducing a new and different order, and undertaking to maintain it, disorder and division will be likely to result. It seems that somebody had assumed that the bread to be used for that purpose should be unleavened; and that no other should under any circumstances be used; and, as I was informed, this matter was being pressed upon the churches. If it was altogether a new question among them, one to which their attention had not before been called, they would no doubt be worried more or less with it. Our Old School Baptist Churches have, I think, uniformly expressed themselves that the Scriptures were an all-sufficient guide in regard to all points of doctrine and order, and thereby the man of God might be perfect, being thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We might suppose that the first thing to do in disputing the prevailing order among us would be to find the Scripture that had been neglected; and, if none could be found, there need be little heed given to the teachings that would lead to important changes in our order, if not to more or less disorder and confusion. I remember to have heard of some querying as to whether unleavened bread was not used at the time when the ordinance was instituted; and all the reason that I have ever heard offered, and all the warrant that I know of for a conclusion that such bread was used, is simply that it was the only bread at hand at the time; the institution of the ordinance following immediately after the observance of the feast of the passover. If it had been intended to supersede the passover, or as a substitute for it, they would not have both been observed. The passover itself was typical, and one among the many types and figures observed among the Jews during that typical dispensation; but they all ended when the substance of which they were types had come. Not only the bread, but the lamb and the bitter herbs, all of which were significant, and which appertained to that passover feast, all passed away, as a ves-

ture is folded up and laid aside, when Christ our passover was sacrificed for us. So we find the Savior saying to his disciples, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."—Luke xxii. 15, 16. I need not refer to the important reasons why not only that unleavened bread should be used at this feast, but that no leaven should be allowed in their houses at the time; as with the passing away of the feast itself, its design having been accomplished, all the particular provisions of which it was made up ended with it. As all that was designed by it was fulfilled in the kingdom of Christ when that was set up, so there was nothing of it to be transferred to that kingdom. Among Jewish believers mention is sometimes made afterward of the days of unleavened bread, in entire distinction from the communion, as observed at a different time, as in Acts xx. 6, 7: "And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," &c. It will be seen by this quotation that there was no connection between the two; and no reason from this instance, or any other of which we have mention, that any special kind of bread, other than what might be at hand, and was in general use as bread, was required or was used. As far as it goes, it seems to me like going back to the old covenant to gather up and retain for use in the gospel church some of the mere shadows of good things to come, the value of which perished with the using, instead of appreciating and being satisfied with that substance in which all is fulfilled. Forms and figures and symbols had their use in their day; but the value was not in themselves, but in the things that they prefigured. An unbecoming devotion to the outward form and shadow tends to divert our minds and call our attention away from that instruction and comfort that is in the spirit and substance. It is not commendable in those who are risen with Christ, and should enjoy those things which are revealed in him, and are found where he sits in his kingdom, to be looking after the ordinances that were all nailed to the cross. The idea is bread—such food as sustains life, and not some peculiar variety of bread.

I have heard of criticisms that savor, it seems to me, of childishness, if nothing worse; such as the size of the loaf, whether it be whole or divided, or whether the outer crust be on or off. The old apostle would be likely to challenge us whether we were not yet carnal if he were to hear such things. We certainly have not yet put away all childish things. It is the substance that we should be after. It is leaven of a different kind

that needs to be purged out—the leaven of malice, or hard, unbrotherly feeling one toward another; allowing outside matters and worldly business and interests to come in between us and our brethren, and so alienation and coolness have place where all but love should be done away, and we should forbear and forgive, as we hope we have been forgiven. If sincerity and truth be there, and we are prepared to eat with gladness and singleness of heart, it will not matter about the emblem used, whether we even know whether there is leaven in its preparation or not. I have for myself seen more trouble, or rather been more in doubt, over the other element, the wine, than I have about the bread. It has of late years, in this section of the country, been somewhat difficult to get hold of wine that was not either badly adulterated or entirely spurious. If the bringing of Christ and our experience of his grace to our remembrance depended upon the elements used at our communion seasons, we might then devote ourselves to the purity and fitness of the emblems, rather than to self-examination, with more propriety. “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat.” I think it would be well for those who on some trifling account allow themselves to be absent, remaining at home, to examine themselves also. “Let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.”

The above is submitted.

E. RITTENHOUSE.

WAVERLY, N. Y., March 16, 1888.

**BRETHREN BEEBE:**—If you think proper, please publish the within letter from brother Thomas Cole, as he is accused by some of being a Means Baptist. This speaks for itself.

I feel impressed to drop a few lines by way of witnessing to the truth as set forth in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. A prominent point contended for by all the writers is that the life of the church is Christ. None deny it. Jesus says, “I give unto them eternal life.” Not give eternal life to eternal life; but, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them [the sheep] eternal life.” Again, “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Here I understand are two characters presented: saved sinners, and those not saved. The life of the church, with all spiritual blessings, which come from that eternal fountain of life, were given the church in Christ before the world began; therefore we use the term eternal vital unity or oneness. “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.” Many members, yet but one body and one life. The Adamic family had one

life given to them in Adam, as head and progenitor, and this life is made manifest by a natural birth. The saints of God had life given them in Christ, as head and progenitor, and this life is made manifest by a spiritual birth. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” In whom is this life made manifest? Paul to the Ephesians answers, “You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” In the nineteenth verse Paul says of these same characters, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”—Eph. ii. 19. Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye [Nicodemus] must be born again.” Convince me that the Savior was speaking to and of himself as an eternal Spirit, or that Nicodemus was not a sinner, and I must cease forever from declaring that the sinner is given eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand; that he brings the blind by a way that they knew not; that he leads them in paths that they had not known; that he makes darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. If it is not sinners that experience these things, where will we apply the following precious promises? “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.” “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.” And whom did the apostle have in view in First Corinthians i. 26-29? “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty,” &c. And the reason given is, “That no flesh should glory in his presence.” Surely the choice of God embraces these very characters. These were included with and are of that number that the apostle Peter addresses as follows, “To the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.”

I did not intend to write so much, but could not find a stopping place. Do with this scribble as you think best. I fear that I have not written so as to be fully understood. If I have erred, may God forgive and brethren correct me in love. I feel

that I am of but little if any benefit to my brethren, the chief of sinners, and if saved, it must be by free, unmerited grace, and that alone.

I am, as ever, your unworthy servant,

D. MARVIN VAIL.

ROYALTON, Ohio, Jan. 6, 1888.

**BROTHER D. M. VAIL:**—As the Israelites were called upon to remember many things which the Lord had done for them, and to call to mind the way in which they had been led, so I often find my thoughts roaming over days past and gone, and am astonished at beholding the road I have traveled, and the things I have seen on the way, so different and so unlooked for at every step, that I am very ready to believe that I know not what a day may bring forth; for as the past is wonderful, so the future is wholly unknown to me. But trusting in the promise of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, I feel safe, and “with Christ in the vessel I smile at the storm.”

But to retrospect. In 1855, while sailing in a gorgeous vessel, so to speak, in a sea of worldly delight, on a voyage after worldly gain, my vessel seemed to be struck so hard that every timber at once seemed splintered by the dreadful shock, and down I went under the dark waves of condemnation to rise no more forever, as I thought. There I remained for about two years, without a glimmering ray of hope that it would ever be any better for me, either in time or eternity. Those dreadful days I can never forget. My best friends were not informed of my condition. God was not my friend, and hope was not. At the end of about two years this feeling of condemnation was gone, I knew not how nor where, but no hope nor joy to take its place for many days, when a sweet hope of good things was given me in a small degree, which to-day, some thirty years having gone by, still remains, though often I seem to have to hunt for it, and am brought down to hope that I have a hope. As the light increased I could not but tell the things I had seen and heard; and without thinking or asking or expecting it, I was given liberty to speak in public, and in due time was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry. O what an ordeal that was to me! Surely I was not the right one; nor am I fully reconciled yet. In fear and trembling I go forth, often fully deciding to quit forever; but I find myself at it again, and it seems that I might about as well quit quitting. When I look around the harvest is great, the vineyard needs tending, the weeds need keeping down, the tender vines need attention, for they bear tender grapes, and the little foxes need watching and taking; not to be made household pets of, but like the “little ones” of Babylon, to be “dashed against the stones,” beautiful though they may be in appearance, and harmless as they may be in their infantile state.—See Psalm cxxxvii. 8, 9. I

wish to be understood that I consider Sunday Schools, Missionary Societies, and the thousand and one religious inventions of the day, to be these little ones of Babylon, that are to be dashed to pieces whenever they show their snakish heads inside the precincts of Zion. They should be treated according to their genealogy, and not according to their claims to goodness. As they are not commanded of God, they are necessarily the legitimate offspring of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience. But on account of their innocent appearance and goodly pretensions, and their agreeable affiliations with the good world around us, some very dear but much deluded brethren have a disposition to take some of these little fellows to raise, and to have them adopted into the family, to be brought up with the children. O sickening thought! To see the hearts of my people stolen by these modern Absaloms, foretells to me a day in the future (how near, I know not) when, as in Absalom's time, many in Israel shall fall. As of old, they say, “Come, let us build together, for we worship God as you do;” so, as of old, may we all say, “Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God,” &c.—Ezra iv. 2, 3.

With these views impressing themselves on my mind, and seeing the snare and its danger to the unsuspecting ones of Israel, I should feel derelict in my duty did I wholly remain silent; and ignorant and weak as I am, I do feel it a duty to say a word by tongue and pen as opportunity affords. I apprehend that the God-dishonoring doctrine of means and instrumentalities underlies all this; and though we as an association and in our several churches do not give place to it for one hour, yet we have been laid siege to by cunning adversaries at two different times within the last few years, in order to captivate the silly ones, which resulted in the dromitire and overthrow of the assailants in both instances. But the enemy is on the alert; and with fair words and smooth speeches is ready to deceive the hearts of the simple. As the children of Israel had foes without and foes within, so is it now. We can bear the reproaches of outside enemies, but it is hard to bear the insinuations and misrepresentations of those within the camp. He that soweth discord among brethren is hated of God, and “a whisperer separateth chief friends;” yet I have been made painfully acquainted with both. A young brother said to me not long ago, one who had been made lately to pass through the fire, “I never thought that Christians could be guilty of willful wrong-doing, but had thought them entirely incapable of it.” And when he unexpectedly met with hard treatment and harder words, he felt crushed. From what I have personally known and experienced within the last thirty years, I

could reply to him that there was no limit to the extent a christian would go when he lived after the flesh. Only the restraining power of God can keep them in the path of holiness. I can bear testimony to this, and feel thankful that I have been restrained by his overruling hand from outbreking sins, knowing that the seeds of all sins are within me, and that by nature I am a child of wrath, and no better than the worst; but I hope I have been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, or, in other words, "born again;" for to be born is to be delivered, as Paul said, "from my mother's womb;" and to be born again is to be delivered from the power of darkness. The same man, or sinner, if you please, that was in bondage, is made free; who was once in the kingdom of darkness, is now translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Again, "Ye were some time darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord."—Eph. v. 8. Yours,

THOMAS COLE.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

As I feel that I am drawing near the grave, I would like to write a little of what I hope the Lord has done for me, a poor sinner. I was born February 25, 1813. My mother was a Baptist before I was born, and took me to meeting with her when I was a child. When I was about eight years of age I was very ill, and thought I was going to die. I begged the Lord to have mercy on me and pardon my sins, and this hymn seemed very precious to me at that time,

"See, Israel's gentle Shepherd stands,  
With all engaging charms."

From that time I was often in trouble, and felt that I was not fit to die; but when I was about twelve years of age my troubles increased, and I thought all I could do was to pray; and I would go in secret and try to pray, but my poor prayers did not seem to do me any good. Thus I went on for three years with this trouble of mind, like a dark cloud hanging over me. Many passages of Scripture would be fastened on my mind, but they all condemned me; but in the summer of 1828 my trouble of mind was so great I thought there was no mercy for me. If a heavy storm came I felt as if it was because I was such a great sinner. O how I cried and begged the Lord to have mercy on me and forgive my many sins. Sometimes when on my knees trying to pray I would feel as if the words fell back on my own head; and I thought the Lord would not hear my poor prayers, and I would stop for awhile going in secret. Still the breathings of my soul were, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." The Bible and Rippon's hymns were about all I read. Several times two lines or a verse of a hymn would pass through my mind with comfort. One was,

"Away, my unbelieving fears,  
Let fear in me no more take place;  
My Savior will at length appear,  
And show the brightness of his face."

But it would soon pass away, and I would be in the same trouble again. I mourned because I could not mourn as I ought. I thought if it was the Lord's work I would have no rest day nor night, for I felt myself to be a great sinner in the sight of God. The August association came on, and there was an opening made for me to go, and O how thankful I felt; for I thought then, if ever, the Lord would send some word of comfort to my soul. How ignorant and foolish was I to limit the Lord's time. I went, but I received no comfort. I was indeed heart-sick, for I thought it was not the Lord's work, else he would reveal himself to me and comfort my heart. I cannot tell what kind of a state my mind was in at this time. When first I went to the meeting the giving out of a hymn would make the tears flow freely, but now they were dried up. It seemed I was looking for something, I knew not what, and was afraid to think there was any comfort for me. Still I cried for mercy. When meeting time came I thought I must go, though not looking for anything for myself. I went to a prayer meeting, and an old member arose and gave out this hymn,

"When some kind shepherd from his fold  
Has lost a straying sheep,  
Through vales, o'er hills, he anxious roves,  
And climbs the mountain steep."

He read the whole hymn, and it was precious to me. Surely the Lord sent it to comfort my soul. I bowed my head and wept tears of joy. I felt that I was the lost sheep the Savior had in mercy brought home, and I was enabled to rejoice. When I arose to go, I felt light. It seemed as if a great weight was removed. I soon began to feel that if the church would receive me I would love to be baptized. That ordinance I had loved from a child. So, after telling them a little, I was received, and on September 7th, 1828, I was baptized. I felt very happy when I came up out of the water; but it was not long before I began to be troubled because I could not live as I ought, and the warfare has continued ever since. I have passed through many sore trials since then, but the dear Lord has brought me through them all thus far. I still hope in his mercy, that

"He who has helped me hitherto  
Will help me all my journey through."  
The dear Lord has granted me many mercies all my life long, and I do desire to praise him for them all. I cannot praise him as I ought, but I do hope that I shall before long praise him in notes that are divine.

S B. TARTLTON.

(See obituary on page 119.)

THE name of sister Mary Parker is greatly endeared to the household of faith, especially to as many of the saints as have read the book of

"Gems." Truly it is a book enriched with the precious gems of deep christian exercises and meditations, made radiant with the light and beauty of heavenly truth and grace. Her many years of extreme bodily affliction and suffering, and the abundant grace and comfort of the Lord that have sustained her therein, are simply wonderful. Job's agonizing bodily afflictions were no worse than hers in intensity, while they were short compared with the years that she has suffered. The book of "Gems" was written at intervals during those trying and painful years; and it is a wonderful and heart-touching history of her daily life, and of the remarkable dealings of the Lord with her deeply tried soul. Her letters will bear reading again and again, and they will ever appear new, fresh and precious. In this respect they are like the soul-moving writings of the sweet psalmist of Israel. Every brother and sister should have Mary Parker's Letters at hand; and whenever you feel to fret and murmur at your light afflictions, sit down and read an hour in any part of her book, and it will be as balm and healing medicine to your spirit. Your heart will be softened, comforted and made better, and your soul will be humbled within you. The book of "Gems" is a rich and precious treasure; and if you will all send for it, dear readers, you will be benefited.

DAVID BARTLEY.

PANOLA, Ga., April 23, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Allow me space in our dear paper to say to brother H. Cox that his letter which appeared in the April 15th number of the SIGNS was read with deep interest, and I am thankful for it; but it was the seventh and eighth verses of the first chapter, instead of the seventh chapter, that I called his attention to. Let me say to our dear sister Bessie Durand that I very much enjoyed her excellent letter which appeared in the same number of the SIGNS. She writes so good that I would love to see her letters appear oftener. Although she is a stranger in the flesh, I have been sweetly drawn in love to her. I too have read the volumes of the dear sisters Kate Swartout and Mary Parker, and was sweetly comforted while reading them. I love them both dearly for the truth's sake, and my private correspondence with them has been very pleasant to me. It is wonderful indeed, the Lord's dealings with dear sister Parker. While she is so deeply afflicted, being upon her bed helpless, burdened with cares and troubles, with neither father nor mother to love and cherish her, yet she seems to have wonderful manifestations of a heavenly Father's love, and she manifests such a resignation to his divine will, sweetly resting in the blessed promises of her Savior.

Your unworthy sister,

ARMINDA L. DULIN.

ARLINGTON, Texas, April 3, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN:—We desire to build a meeting house for the Old Baptists exclusively in or near the town of Arlington, Tarrant County, Texas. There are very few Primitive Baptist meeting-houses in or near this part of Texas; and around about here the condition of the brethren is such that we have very little prospect of having a house separate from the "nations" unless we can get help from the brotherhood in other parts of the country. If we have favor in your sight, brethren, any contribution, however small, will be gratefully received. "For the ways of Zion do mourn, being desolate in this particular."

A correct account of all moneys received will be kept for future reference. Send money by post-office order, postal note, registered letter, or by express, addressed to me at Arlington, Tarrant County, Texas.

J. S. COLLINS.

HASKELL, Texas, April 20, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I wish to say to the brethren and friends of the Old School Baptist cause who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and have been feasting upon the glorious truth advocated by that medium, that we should come to the relief of brother Sylvester Hassell at once. I have bought one of his books, and would not do without it for a hundred dollars, if I knew that I could not get another like it. I inclose this evening a postal note for brother Hassell for two dollars and fifty cents, with the calculation of remitting again when necessary. Make one effort, and let us see if we cannot hear through the SIGNS that brother Hassell has been greatly relieved.

S. J. PRESTON.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please change my address from Ludlow, Ky., to 221 N. Troy St., Dayton, Ohio, and publish the change in the SIGNS, that brethren and friends may know where to find me.

P. W. SAWIN.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please put a notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that my residence and post-office address is now northwest corner Eleventh and Powell Streets, St. Joseph, Missouri, instead of No. 2002 Francis Street, as heretofore.

Yours in tribulation and poverty,  
R. M. THOMAS.

#### PRICE REDUCED.

BROTHER J. B. Hardy, of Wellsford, Kiowa Co., Kan., has authorized us to publish a reduction in the price of the "Five Days Debate." For reduced prices and full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### "THE EDITORIALS."

#### FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

## CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Elders and messengers of the churches composing the Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, in associational meeting with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, in Miami, Saline Co., Mo., on Friday before the first Saturday in October, 1887, and the two succeeding days, which we trust is an assembling of ourselves together for the worship of our God, and as such we hope not to forsake it, but to continue to exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching; to the churches whose servants and messengers we are, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

DEARLY BELOVED—Whom we love in the truth, and pray above all things that ye may prosper and be in health. We greatly desire that we may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that we may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and us; and that ye “Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.” Therefore we wish to speak unto you the things which become sound doctrine; for so it becomes us, to testify unto the word of his grace, that ye may be edified thereby. There is a great fullness in the word of his grace, embodying as it does all the gifts of his divine power, which are all things that pertain unto life and godliness. We wish not to speak unto you of that which ye do not know, but of that which ye do know, and to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.

In presenting to you some of the things which pertain to his glory and majesty, we admonish that ye “hold fast the form of sound words, which ye have heard [in the teaching of the Spirit, both in your experience and in the Scriptures of eternal truth], in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.” It is no new doctrine to you that ye are sinners by nature, condemned by the law of sin and death, lost, ruined and undone; neither is it an idle story that ye are saved alone by the grace of our God, and in no other name but that of our Lord Jesus Christ. The angel said to Joseph, “Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.” Jesus said, “The Son of man is come to seek and to

save that which was lost.” Paul said, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Peter said, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

Now, seeing ye know these things to be so of a truth, and are comforted in the hope that it is indeed all of the Lord, to the praise of his grace, ye may well follow his teaching further, and trace out how it is that we do know them. We are well aware that we do not know them of the flesh, nor by the flesh, nor according to the flesh. We know that our earthly or Adam man, which includes all that is contained in our fleshly nature, is sinful, mortal and corrupt, and cannot see or enter into the kingdom of God; neither can it receive or know the things which are of God. Then, as the world by wisdom knows not God, it surely is the Spirit of God that knows the things of God. “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” So we are taught that it is not the flesh quickened, nor man’s sinful nature born again, nor his mortal soul regenerated, as being that by which we see and know these things; but that *it is the Spirit of God* by which they are received and known. Hence we are admonished, “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God: and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” And further, “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” We cannot say of ourselves in the flesh that we sin not, neither can we claim for ourselves that we keep ourselves, and that wicked one toucheth us not; but the dear Savior graciously teaches us, not only in his holy word, but by his indwelling Spirit, to know that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Not that the flesh is born again, or born over, or that the Spirit is born again; but that *ye, dear children of the kingdom, who are troubled because of sin and pollution, and who lament your vileness and corruption, are in your earthly nature born of the flesh, and in your*

heavenly nature are born of the Spirit, and hence feel daily the terrible conflicts of that dreadful warfare between the two. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” You have fully learned that in you, that is, in your flesh, dwells no good thing; that to will is present with you, but to perform that which is good you find not; that the good you would, you do not; and the evil that you would not, that you do; and if you do that you would not, it is no more you that do it, but sin that dwelleth in you. You find then a law, that when you would do good, evil is present with you; because you delight in the law of God after the inward man. But you see another law in your members, warring against the law of your mind, and bringing you into captivity to the law of sin which is in your members, which makes you feel, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” If this knowledge is in you, and abounds, then indeed you have the comforting evidence that you have passed from death unto life, and are in Christ Jesus, and free from condemnation; because the law of life in Christ Jesus hath made you free from the law of sin and death. But ye receive this by faith, not after the flesh; for it is true of you, as of Paul, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Jesus, the man of God, also the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, must needs be sent forth. Though he were the Son of God, yet was he “made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” He must be made like unto his brethren, live and suffer and die in the flesh, and be raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and thus be revealed the first-born from the dead, that he might see his kingdom and enter into it—that he should appear in his glory and fullness; for he was given “the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” If he was made like unto his brethren, they must needs be like unto him. They are born of the flesh, made of woman, made under the law, and by it are cursed and dead; but in the fullness of the time which the Father hath chosen and determined to send forth the Spirit of his Son in them, revealing him as

risen from the dead, and dwelling in them, they are born of the Spirit, and are made to know the living and suffering of Jesus with them in the flesh, under the law, and also his living in them in glory, by his holy Spirit, according to the reign of his grace. In this is the precious oneness of Christ and his people most graciously and sweetly manifested. One in the flesh, with its sin and shame; one under the law, in its curse and death; one in the glorious resurrection of the dead, and triumphant victory over all enemies; and one in the precious exalted life of the faith of him that loved them and gave himself for them. “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” What a comforting, heavenly reckoning! “Alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Not through ourselves in any possible, conceivable way, but through him that is so exceedingly precious to us, who, we trust, believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. Alive to the joys of a good hope through grace, and to the comforts of love and fellowship in Jesus our Lord. Alive to the delights of the blessed assurance that our God reigns and does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. “Who hath gathered the wind in his fists; who hath bound the waters in a garment; who hath established all the ends of the earth;” and who so absolutely determines and governs all things that wicked men and devils can do no more than what our heavenly Father has appointed for his own glory and the good and safety of his people; and who has declared, for the comfort of his Zion, “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” Then, dearly beloved, take encouragement, and trust in the Lord, and stay upon our God. “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.” “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Grace be with you all. Amen.

R. M. THOMAS, Mod.

MARK WHITAKER, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri, in session with the Hope Primitive Baptist Church, in Miami, Saline Co., Mo., on Friday before the first Saturday in October, 1887, and the two succeeding days, to the associations and churches with which she corresponds, sends christian salutation.*

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—It is through the tender mercy of our God that we are permitted once more to meet in an associate capacity, and to hear from each other, and to mingle our voices together in praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God for his tender mercy and loving-kindness toward us, poor, dependent creatures, for his abundant grace that has been bestowed upon us. We feel that our meeting together has been profitable, to the edification of the brethren, and the building of us up in that most holy faith which was once delivered to the saints. Dear brethren, our hearts were made glad by the coming of your messengers, and to hear the truth proclaimed by them, as we believe, to the glory of God and the comfort of his people. We still desire a continuation of your correspondence; and may continued love and christian fellowship ever abound amongst us, is our sincere prayer.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the church called Three Forks of Nodaway, Nodaway Co., Mo., to begin on Friday before the first Saturday in October, 1888, and continue three days, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and peace. May the Lord guide us all in his own right way. Amen.

R. M. THOMAS, Mod.  
MARK WHITAKER, Clerk.

LARGE HYMN BOOK FOR A DOLLAR, SIX FOR FOUR DOLLARS AND A HALF.

We have just had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

We also have the small type book bound in cloth, which we will send post paid at price stated above. Cash must always accompany the orders. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

JUST RECEIVED.

WE have just received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF  
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

HATING HIS BROTHER.

WILL Elder Wm. L. Beebe give through the SIGNS his views on First John iii. 15? Who is his brother? And how can a child of God hate his brother?

H. J. REDD.

NORTHPORT, Ala., March 25, 1888.

REPLY.

While ever wishing to be ready to comply with the requests of those who ask for our views on the subject of the revealed will of our Lord in reference to the church of his redeemed people, it is always with much hesitancy that we would express our understanding of any point on which one of the ministers of Christ professes to need instruction. In attempting to comply with this request of our esteemed brother, Elder Redd, it is not an exception to this usual feeling of insufficiency. Yet, as he only asks for such views as we have, we are willing to submit our thoughts to be examined by him and all our readers, and only ask that what is written be strictly compared with the inspired test, and received or rejected as it may be approved or condemned by that only standard of divine truth. Very little value attaches to our views, or to the sentiments of any mortal, unless they are sustained by the infallible testimony of the inspired Scriptures.

The subject of the whole epistle from which our brother has selected this text is that heavenly love which identifies those in whom dwells the Spirit of Christ. In the verse immediately preceding the text this love is declared to be the evidence that we have passed from death unto life; and it is said that "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." As death can present no action nor emotion of life, so the existence of this vital manifestation of love is often the only tangible evidence which the saints can see to confirm their claim to the possession of the life of Christ. When they live after the flesh they may be so brought into bondage by their carnal mind that they may not be able to find any evidence of the existence in their hearts of that infallible witness of their vital unity with Christ; and then they must feel the reigning power of death as holding them captive. In this bondage they do abide in death.

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." In view of this strong expression of the righteous judgment of God, it does seem incomprehensible that any one who has ever known the power of divine grace should be found in the awful condition described. Well may our brother ask, "How can a child of God hate his brother?" Certainly there is nothing

in the work of the Spirit to produce hatred. Yet it is plain from the declarations of the inspired Scriptures that the chosen disciples of Jesus are they who are liable to this death; and they are the only people to whom the language of this solemn admonition can apply. It would be very absurd to admonish those who are dead in sin with such an appeal. As well caution the dead bodies in the cemetery against the dangers of a contagion. According to the natural idea that the saints are freed from the law of sin which prompts to all iniquity, there could be no propriety in addressing to them such a warning as is here recorded for the learning of all who have fellowship with the apostles. But to those who have to mourn their subjection to the vanity of the body of this death, the inspired declaration is but the expression of what their own experience continually teaches them. The first born son of the fallen Adam fully displayed the principle which is condemned in this expression of the word of the Lord. His example is cited in the immediately preceding context as in contrast with that message (or, commandment), which is in the law of Christ enjoined upon his followers. Judged by the law of a carnal commandment, no man was a murderer until some one had been killed; but by the law of infinite justice the thoughts and intents of the heart are discerned and condemned before they are developed by actual commission of the sinful action contemplated. This condemnation is felt by the living children of God in that death which they endure when they live after the flesh. It was to those whom he recognized as "brethren" and the "beloved of God, called to be saints," that Paul said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Rom. viii. 13. This language can apply to none but those who are led by the Spirit of God, yet who have a continual war in their members against that holy guidance. They are admonished to "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." And "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"—Rom. vi. 12, 16. This is addressed unmistakably to those whom the apostle recognized as "children of God." It could not apply to either the natural man or the Spirit of Christ in the saints, as separate from the sinner who was subject to be led by the Spirit, or to yield himself to the service of sin. When the saints yield themselves to the service of sin, they manifest the works of the flesh, prominent in the enumeration of which is this very principle of hatred.—See Gal. v. 19-21. In the divine judgment this is the spirit of murder; and they who are governed by it are already guilty of the sin

when the principle dwells in their hearts. While in the sight of men they may be guiltless, the light which shines in their heart shows all the sin which is embodied in that root of evil. They feel that all their secret thoughts are known unto their Judge. "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."—Hebrews iv. 12. This is the judgment seat of Christ, before which all his people must appear; "that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The perfect righteousness of Christ justifies all his redeemed people, and no charge can ever be brought against any of them by the infinitely holy law of sin and death. Yet they are under law to God in their Redeemer. In their individual experience here in time they must reap that which they sow. With unerring exactness in every thought and deed they receive that measure which they mete. "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." If the spirit of hatred rules in the breast of any saint, that terrible fire will burn to his own destruction. If covetousness controls one of these who are under law to Christ, the very object coveted will certainly prove the destruction of his comfort, and bring upon him the fearful rod of divine chastisement. When any professed disciple of Christ can continue in devotion to the gratification of his carnal mind without experiencing the rod of severe chastening, there is good reason for apprehension that he is not recognized by the Lord as one of those children whom he loves. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. xii. 6. Those who have felt the rod of this divine chastening can testify that it is indeed "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

According to the limited thoughts of man there are differences in the degrees of sin. While it seems to be acknowledged that all the family of Adam are sinners, it is quite startling to find the charge of murder embraced in the dreadful indictment which is recorded against every one who is involved in sin. This appears the more wonderful when this terrible charge is recorded against one who is included in the number of those whom the Lord has recognized as his redeemed people. Yet it is to them that James is writing when he says, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain." There is no limit to the development of the evil which is in the carnal mind; and when the saints live after the dictates of that mind they are found guilty of all the

works of the flesh. The severe charge quoted from James was against those whom he called his brethren, and to whom God giveth grace. It is not to be applied to such as never knew the love of God. The same development of the sin which doth so easily beset us is designated in the warning, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."—Heb. iii. 12. One very definite mark of distinction between those who have the Spirit of Christ and all others consists in the cause of their trouble. While the true subject of divine teaching has continually to mourn the evil which he sees in himself, they who have never seen themselves as helpless sinners are deeply grieved because of the sinfulness of others. The fleshly mind of the saints has abundance of the latter kind of sorrow; while that repentance which Jesus gives to his Israel always shows them so much sin in themselves that they have no room for mourning over the sins of others.

"Who is his brother?" In reply to this question it might be sufficient to refer to the answer of the Lord to the parallel question of the lawyer, "Who is my neighbor?"—Luke x. 30-37. But we would rather refer to the experience of brother R., and see if he has not a perfectly conclusive solution of the inquiry in his own heart. Unto whom does your helpless soul cry out of the depth of every distress and trouble? Even when your sinfulness seems to forbid all hope for his favor, you call upon him who is that Friend who loveth at all times, and the Brother born unto you for adversity.—Prov. xvii. 17. The same bond by which you are held in fraternity with him, also includes every one who is led by the Spirit, which is his abiding presence in each of his saints. It is not possible that they who are born of God should be led by that Spirit to hate their brethren. When the current of brotherly love is interrupted, it is always by reason of the sin which dwells in the members of the saints. It may be that the obstacle which forbids the continuance of love is in the carnality of both him who should love and him who should be the object of that love; or, it may be that the carnality of one member forbids that love. In any event there must be a departure from the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus when hatred can exist between brethren. As declared in the last preceding expression of the apostle, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." No clearer explanation of this truth can be given than that which is taught in the experience of the saints. When under the direction of the fleshly mind the saint has been brought to feel that he is alone in the path of obedience, and that they whom he has loved as brethren are all in error, however much he may seem to succeed in vindicating himself, he will abide in death as sure as God deals

with him as with a son whom he loves. Even though the judgment of all the brethren should sustain him who is governed by a carnal spirit, he must still feel that he "abideth in death." So David says, "God setteth the solitary in families; he bringeth out those which are bound with chains; but the rebellious dwell in a dry land."—Psalm lxxviii. 6. The deadly drought of this wretched land is known only to such as have felt the consuming power of the desert sands, where there is no cooling fountain to quench their thirst, nor refreshing dew to afford relief from the burning atmosphere, in which the fire of torment is mingled with every breath. How can one whose vital element is love endure the stifling air of hatred? Well does the inspired word describe the condition of the saints under this dreadful power as being under "the bondage of corruption." And yet it must be that they are subject to be brought into such bondage, or they could not be delivered from it. If there were no possibility of the saints being governed by the carnal mind, they would have no need for the admonitions and exhortation with which the New Testament abounds. Yet it is not by the direction of the Spirit of Christ that they walk contrary to his commandments. With the mind which God works in them they serve the law of God, but with the flesh (that is, with that mind which is born of the flesh) they serve the law of sin.—Rom. vii. 25. It is in their effort to walk in obedience to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus that they find the perpetual warfare to which they are called. Such is the deceitfulness of sin in misleading them that the saints often suppose that they are following the law of Christ, when they are directed by their own sinful inclination. So long as they are under the power of this delusion they cannot believe that they are guided by anything but the desire to obey the commandments of their Lord. By its fruits only is the true character of this deceitful spirit exposed. False spirits as well as false teachers are to be detected by this divinely authorized test.—Matt. vii. 16. Genuine love is always discriminating. It cannot recognize a brother without the evidence that the Spirit of the Redeemer dwells in him. That evidence does not consist in any form of words, nor yet in any prescribed duties to be performed by the sinner; it is the direct revelation from faith to faith. Hence, when one is assured that the Spirit of Christ dwells in his brother, it is equally certain that the same Spirit dwells in himself. The love which goes out to embrace a brother is the present evidence that both are born of God; for none can love the saints but those who know them; and none can know them as saints but those who have obtained like precious faith with them. All such are brethren by birth of the same Holy Spirit. When one of these holy brethren is so controlled

by his fleshly mind as to hate his brother, he not only "abideth in death," but he is "a murderer." The spirit which governs him in hating his brother is the same murderous spirit which was in Cain when he committed the first murder. Hence, in the judgment of that God who tries the heart, every one who is actuated by that spirit is guilty of the sin of Cain.

We have endeavored to show how in our view it is possible that a child of God may hate his brother in the sense of this text. It is not in conformity with the Scriptures to construe this expression of John as implying that the Spirit of Christ can ever produce hatred of those who present its own fruit as evidence of their being truly brethren. But it is in perfect harmony with the whole testimony of inspiration, and also according to the experience of the individual saints, to understand the admonition as declaring just what is the result of yielding to the promptings of that spirit within us which lusteth to envy.—James iv. 5. While under the control of that murderous spirit we can never have the experimental sense of the presence of Christ in us as our eternal life. In this sense we die in our departure from the path of life in obedience to the law of love, which is the whole law of Christ. This is all in the present experience of the saints as sojourning in this world of sin and tribulation. Since their eternal life is hid with Christ in God, nothing which they do or fail to do can affect that life. That is as far above all possibility of being affected by their actions in time as are the stars which are set in the firmament beyond the reach of any earthly power. The whole context shows that this text refers to the practical deportment of the saints. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

At the commencement of the current volume we published a special rate to our subscribers at which they might procure and forward *new* subscribers until April 1st, 1888. Many have responded, and sent us in the aggregate several hundred new names; but owing to the extremely severe weather throughout a large portion of the country, many have written us that they have not been able to get around among the brethren. We have therefore decided to extend the time, and will until further notice receive subscriptions for *new* subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three

dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

These terms apply to none but those who are subscribers. Any one whose name is not on our list, and who wishes to take advantage of these rates, can send two dollars for his own subscription, and one dollar each for all other *new* subscribers.

#### CHURCH HISTORY DEBT OF \$2000.

CONTRIBUTIONS, MARCH AND APRIL, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith inclose a statement of all the contributions, during March and April, toward paying the Church History debt.

I deposit all the money, as soon as received, with brother William Slade, a safe merchant of this place, and when the amount reaches a hundred dollars I expect to send it at once to Wilson, N. C., and have it applied to the payment of my note of \$2,000, which is held there.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., May 1, 1888.

ALABAMA—Mrs. C. A. E. Rebb 1, Sarah Hassingill 1, Elder J. H. Purifoy 1.

ARKANSAS—James P. Haley 1.

FLORIDA—Z. C. Chambliss 3, W. C. Cannon 2, G. J. Tatum 2, James S. Massey 1.

GEORGIA—Charles Ivey 2, T. N. Lester 1, Elder F. M. McLeroy 1, J. G. Moore 1, J. F. Sutton 1, B. H. Zellner 1, E. M. Moore 1, W. E. Zellner 1, Mrs. Mary Chambliss 50c, Elder D. G. McCowen 1, J. F. Childs 1, W. S. Childs 1, Two brethren 1.

ILLINOIS—Hester Rumney 2, Thomas P. Dohy 2.

INDIANA—S. B. Luckett 2, Mrs. Kate Bartley 1, Elder David Bartley 1.

KANSAS—Joseph Stephens 1, T. R. Pittman 50c.

KENTUCKY—Mrs. Fanny Sewell 1, Stephen Langford 2 50.

NEW YORK—Elder J. D. Hubbell 2, Selecta Rhodes 1, John Axford 2, Mrs. Mary Uptegrove 1.

NORTH CAROLINA—N. G. Jones Sr. 1, Miss Fannie M. Jones 1, C. P. Griffin 1, James E. Jones 1, Peter Jones Jr. 50c, N. G. Jones Jr. 25c, Henry Haynil 25c, Joseph P. Gully 1, Elder A. J. Moore 2, W. R. Whichard 2, G. C. Farthing 5.

OHIO—Wm. Betzer 4.

TENNESSEE—A. H. Parks 1.

TEXAS—S. J. Preston 2 50, W. H. Ledbetter 1, B. F. Goins 1, R. B. Long 1.

Total \$70 00.

#### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

John Cox 2 50, J. W. Newton 2 50, Mrs. Ruth A. Hines 2, J. F. Sutton 5, W. R. Waddill 2.—Total \$14 00.

#### MARRIAGES.

APRIL 11, 1888, at the house of the bride's mother, in Parsonsburg, Md., by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Mr. Hilary W. Davis, of Snow Hill, and Miss Mary H. Bailey, of the former place.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you a notice of the loss of **Capt. William E. Buck**, who sailed from New York, Dec. 12, 1887, for Halifax, N. S. Since that time nothing has been heard from him. It is supposed that the vessel foundered at sea on or about Dec. 16th, as there was a violent northeast storm at that time. The vessel was a new one, launched in July last, and was on the third trip. The crew consisted of Capt. Buck, the mate, steward, and four men, which must have all gone down together, as nothing has been heard of them since.

Captain Buck was born in Dorchester, New Brunswick, August 30, 1839. He commenced going to sea at the age of twelve years, and has followed the sea the greater part of his life. He has visited nearly all ports of the world. Five years ago he went to Port Said, in Egypt, his wife and two children with him. He leaves a wife and three children to mourn his sad loss, the youngest being now only ten days old. He buried seven children, having had ten in all.

Captain Buck was baptized about ten years ago, by Elder D. C. Lawson, joined the church at Dorchester Cape, and was a firm believer in salvation by grace. He was the first one of us that found out the Old School Baptists in the United States, or the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. He bought a few papers and hymn books and brought them home to the church. They just suited him. He was in Baltimore, Md., one beautiful Sunday morning, as he told me, and thought he would look for a people that believed that they were saved through faith, without any works of man to help. One man told him where he would find a little church, a peculiar people, who did not believe in Sunday Schools nor working to save souls. He said he did not know what they believed. He went, and it was just what he wanted to find. It was the church where Elder F. A. Chick preached.

I will give you a few extracts from his last letter to me:

"BROOKLYN, N. Y., Dec. 8, 1887.

"Dear Brother:—I arrived here two weeks to-morrow. I will finish loading in another day. I am loaded with coal, oil, and piling on deck, bound to Halifax, N. S. I had a long passage of thirteen days; beat all the way but one day. We have had three days cold since I left home. I left one hand short, and the steward was laid up one week coming on. So then I was two hands short, so had to come safe. I shall ship two men here. I shall haul up two months in Halifax, if I do not go to the West Indies. I have been to meeting two Sundays. Heard Meredith and A. B. Francis. Next Sunday W. Housel. Sunday week B. Jenkins. There is no yea and nay gospel with them; but all the promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus.—1 Peter iv. 12, 13; Gen. xxii. 14; Psa. lxxxix. 15 (read the Psalm and see how it runs); Acts ii. Peter clears it up beautifully. But I feel very poor in spirit most of the time, as I have mules to drive most of the time. Good bye. Good bye to all the children and Mrs. Buck. W. E. BUCK."

Dear brethren, please publish the above in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It has been some time since Captain Buck was lost. We have been looking and hoping to hear of him being taken off the wreck and carried to some port, or landed on some island where he could not get off. Now as spring has opened, and we have no tidings of him, all hope of him being alive is given up.

Your sorrowing brother, in hope of eternal life,

J. R. BUCK.

DORCHESTER, N. B., April 23, 1888.

**William S. Carpenter** died at his home at Kelly's Corners, Michigan, on the morning of March 19, 1888. Father was sev-

enty-five years old on the fifth day of the same month. He was born in western New York, where he was early satisfied with the mercy of the Lord, and was baptized by his father, Elder James Carpenter, when about thirteen years of age. When the division took place among the Baptists he went with those who believe that salvation is of the Lord alone, and has been identified with them ever since. In early life he was married to Miss Lydia Older, who survives him. He came to Michigan when about twenty-one years old, and here spent the remainder of his life. For some years he was a member of the Fairfield Church, Lenawee County, but for nearly thirty years has been a member of the Columbia Church at this place, having moved his residence from that place to this. Three years ago this spring he received a stroke of paralysis, from which he never fully recovered, but was about most of the time until on Thursday as he died on Monday morning, when another stroke occurred, and in such a few days father was no more. He never seemed to know me after I was called to see him. He talked much, not knowing what he said, but no uncomely nor unpleasant word escaped his lips. It was more like a child's talk than any thing else, only when he would repeat some portion of Scripture, then his voice took the solemn sound it always did when he was talking of spiritual things. He could give us no parting word nor blessing, yet we knew father could have nothing else in his heart but blessings for us, for he was a most kind and forgiving father to his children. He could tell us nothing of the prospect before him, but of this he had been telling us all his life, all his life living for the hope and joy set before him, enduring this life and waiting patiently for his change, looking to the end of his faith, even the salvation of the soul. He seemed to suffer intensely, but looked so patient, and finally sank peacefully away, like a weary child going to its rest. He was most precious to us all, especially to our little church, of which he had long time been clerk, and always led in singing our sweet, humble songs, in which he took great delight. He has been something of an invalid ever since I can remember, but always filled his place when meeting time came. If but two or three came together, father was one of them.

Elder Swartout preached at his funeral, using the words of Paul, "I am now ready to be offered," &c. He was assisted by Elder Thomas J. Wyman, and I truly felt that the consolations of the gospel were given us at that time.

Father loved all the ministering brethren, and his pastor, Elder Swartout, could never have a better friend than father was to him. He was a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES since near the commencement of its publication, and said he wished to be while he lived, and so he was. From my first recollections I remember seeing father reading his paper with so much interest and pleasure.

He leaves our mother and five children, the eldest son in Kansas, the oldest daughter in Colorado, one son and two daughters at this place, besides brothers, sisters and many friends to remember him. Nowhere is he missed so much as in the church, and we hope the brethren everywhere will find it in their hearts to lift up a prayer for the poor, little remnant that is left.

KATE SWARTOUT.

DIED—January 2, 1888, **Mrs. Mary Tolle**. Sister Tolle was born in Prince William County, Virginia, November 28, 1791, and was baptized in the fellowship of Broad Run Church about the year 1816, by the late Robert Laytham, soon after which she moved to this state, and she and her husband, the late Reuben Tolle, joined the Particular Baptist Church at Mount Gilead, of which she remained an order-

ly and beloved member until death released her from this world. She was an exemplary woman, of more than ordinary intelligence, uncompromising in her faith, devoted to her church, her family and her friends.

She leaves four children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, together with her neighbors, friends and the church, to mourn their loss.

Brother Tolle was for many years deacon of our church.

We believe our loss is her gain. We sorrow not as those who have no hope; for she believed that Jesus died and rose again, and that all that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Her body was laid in the family burying ground, there to await its summons at the final restitution of all things, when there will be a coming forth of all that be in their graves, at the hearing of his voice; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. The one shall go into life eternal, the other into everlasting shame and contempt.

"Why do we mourn departing friends, Or shake at death's alarms?"

'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends To call them to his arms."

May God sanctify this dispensation of his providence to our good and his own declarative glory, is the sincere desire of yours to serve,

J. H. WALLINGFORD.  
CHESTER, Ky., April 12, 1888.

OUR dear departed sister, **Mary Stover Smith**, was born in Virginia, July 21, 1809, was married to James Smith, August 19, 1829, moved to Ohio in November, 1836, and to Putnam County on the first day of January, 1837. She died April 3, 1888, aged seventy-eight years, eight months and thirteen days. She received a hope, and was baptized in the fellowship of the Sugar-Creek Church, November 9, 1872. She was a firm believer in the doctrine as held by the Predestinarian Baptists, and adorned the doctrine of God our Savior by an upright walk and godly conversation. She fell on the fifth day of January last and broke her thigh. She bore her affliction with christian fortitude. I visited her a number of times in her affliction, and she appeared reconciled to the dealings of the Lord with her, and talked freely of the goodness of the blessed Redeemer, and the sufferings he bore for the sins of his people. Her limb appeared to get well, but she suffered very much from lying in bed, and died with consumption. She was buried just three months from the day she fell.

She leaves an aged and afflicted husband, with whom she had lived fifty-nine years, as peaceably and happily, perhaps, as mortals could live; also four sons and four daughters, forty-six grandchildren and twenty-two great-grandchildren, together with the church and a host of friends, to mourn our loss. But our loss is her eternal gain.

The writer tried to preach on the occasion from the text, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," to a large and very attentive audience, in the Christian meeting house in Vaughnsville, after which the remains were interred in the Vaughnsville Cemetery, to await the great change.

J. G. FORD.

RUSHMORE, Ohio.

DIED—At her late residence in Washington, D. C., Dec. 14, 1886, sister **Susanna B. Tarlton**, in the seventy-fourth year of her age.

Sister Tarlton was baptized in the fellowship of the church in Alexandria, Va., by Elder Spencer Cone, Sept. 7, 1828, remaining a devoted and faithful member of the church there until her death. For nearly sixty years, amid confusion, controversy, strife and division, as well as

in the quiet, peaceful ways of Zion, she stood firm in the love of the truth, a humble follower of the Lamb, and an unwavering believer in the "doctrine of God our Savior." How precious is the lesson of such a life, an evidence of the power and triumph of faith. In death as in life she experienced the precious power of the righteousness of truth. Her daughter writes me that a short time previous to her death, "I asked her if there was anything that we could do for her. With a faint smile she answered me, 'It is all right, child; it is all right.' It was to us a comforting assurance that though she was passing through the valley of the shadow of death, yet it was with her all right."

I send you her experience for publication in the SIGNS.

Yours in gospel fellowship,

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va.

(See communication on page 115.)

DIED—On Wednesday morning, April 18, 1888, at New Castle, Delaware, **Herman Reed**, son of John H. and Emily Reed, and grandson of Elder E. Rittenhouse, aged six years, eight months and fifteen days.

An interesting and affectionate boy, affording much promise and hope to the fond parents, from a very trifling wound in his hand was seized with that terrible disease, the lockjaw, which in a few hours terminated in death. E. R.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Baltimore Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore Co., Md., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May (16th), 1888, and continue the two following days.

A cordial invitation is extended to all who desire to meet with us.

Those attending the association who come by way of Baltimore will take the train for Cockeysville on the Northern Central R. R. from Calvert Station at 3.30 p. m. on Tuesday, or from Union Station five minutes later. The train reaches Cockeysville at 4.15, where they will be met and cared for. Those coming down the Northern Central R. R. will reach Cockeysville about 4.30, and will also be met and cared for. We hope to meet many of our brethren at that time.

F. A. CHICK.

THE Delaware Old School Baptist Association will hold her next annual session, if the Lord will, with the Welsh Tract Church, near Newark, Delaware, to begin on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May (23d), 1888, and continue until Friday evening following.

Those coming from the Eastern Shore will take train leaving Delmar at 4.20 p. m., on Tuesday. Get ticket for Wilson, on Delaware City R. R.

Those coming through Baltimore will take train leaving Baltimore about 3.00 p. m., on Tuesday. Ticket to Newark, Delaware.

Those coming from or through Philadelphia will take train leaving Broad Street Station at 5.00 p. m., on Tuesday. Ticket to Newark, Del.

There will be conveyances in waiting for those trains. All will be cared for the very best we can. We hope many of the dear brethren and friends will be in attendance.

JOSEPH L. STATON.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 30th), 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east will take

train at the foot of Liberty Street, New York, at 1.30 p. m., on Tuesday, and come to Bethayres, on the Bound Brook R. R., where they will be met. A train leaving New York at 4.00 p. m. will be met for those not able to come earlier.

Those coming from other directions will take train at Third and Burk Streets depot, Philadelphia, at 4.00 p. m., Tuesday, and come to Southampton Station, where they will be met. Also, trains will be met on Wednesday at 10.20 a. m., at Southampton.

All lovers of the truth are affectionately invited to meet with us.

I. P. HELTINGS, Church Clerk.

THE Warwick Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (6th), 1888, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

Brethren and friends coming east or west by the New York, Lake Erie & Western Rail Road will change cars at Greycourt, taking the Lehigh & Hudson River Rail Road to Warwick, where they will be met on Tuesday, on the arrival of the evening train, about seven o'clock. This train leaves New York City, foot of Chambers Street, about 4.00 p. m. The first train in the morning, Wednesday, both east and west, arrives at Warwick about 9.30, in time for the meeting.

Those who expect to return to New York will find it to their advantage to buy excursion tickets, good for thirty days. We hope to see many brethren and friends present.

WM. L. BEEBE, Pastor.

THE Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, if the Lord will, with the Charleston & Sullivan Church, in Tioga County, Pa., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (13th), 1888, and continue in session the two following days.

FOR the information of all who may wish to attend the Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon, for the year 1888, we will state that by an arrangement of the churches composing said association a change has been made in the time of holding the same. Therefore the 35th annual meeting of said association will be held with the Siloam Church, at Harmony School House, some three miles northeast of Mt. Angel, in Marion County, Oregon, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1888, worship to begin at 11 o'clock a. m.

Those coming on the Narrow Gauge R. R. will be met by brethren at Mt. Angel station with teams to convey them to the place of meeting.

All Old School or Primitive Baptists are cordially invited to attend our association and join with us in the solemn worship of the Lord our God.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.

E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

THE Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with Columbia Church, at Kelly's Corners, Michigan, on Friday, June 8, 1888.

Those coming by way of Toledo will change at Union Depot for Napoleon, Michigan, where they will be met. Those coming from the southwest will change cars at Hillsdale, Michigan, for Woodstock, which is near the place of meeting. All should take first morning train, Thursday, June 7th, to meet connection. A cordial invitation is extended, especially to ministering brethren.

J. P. CONAWAY.

THE Turkey River Association will be held at Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa, be-

ginning on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1888, and continue the two following days.

Hampton is situated on the Iowa Central Rail Road, and a branch called D. D. R. R., from Waverly west.

A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of Bible truth.

PAUL SOHNER.

### YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in June (23d and 24th), 1888. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters, especially brethren in the ministry.

Those coming by rail will be met at Griffin's Corners Station on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning, the day of the meeting.

It is expected that the Halcott Church will unite with us, and not have any yearly meeting there this year.

O. F. BALLARD, Clerk.

### A FIVE DAYS DEBATE ON CHURCH IDENTITY,

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1888. NO. 11.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., May 3, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I greatly regret that I misunderstood brother Smoot's meaning in the interview he had with me at our house, as he says I did in his letter in the SIGNS for May first. Since he did visit me after having sent to the SIGNS his attack upon my article, and before it was published, I much regret that he should not have left me with as definite an understanding of his sentiments upon the points he had antagonized as he had of mine. When he left our house we all who heard his conversation certainly thought we had abundant reason to suppose that the apparent difference between him and me in our understanding had been removed, and it was a source of much gratification; but he now says that we still differ. It is likely I took a good deal for granted, as brethren in personal interviews are apt to do; and when such mutual confidence begins to be unwarrantable, it may well fill us with consternation and sad forebodings. Until the reply of brother Smoot to my article, I had no idea of any essential difference between us; for I have frequently expressed the same sentiments through the SIGNS, as also in preaching for more than twenty years. Elder Beebe has also presented the same understanding of the new birth a number of times far more clearly than I could. Heretofore there has been nothing in the published writings of brother Smoot to indicate that he held a different view; but his frequent use of the expression, "quickened sinners," and his employment of the term, "redeemed child of God," with other things, left me no reason to question our being of one mind in these things.

I now remember of but twice in twenty-three years that I have felt it necessary to publicly assail the position taken by a brother, but have generally been content to express my own views, and leave brethren to judge of their merits as compared with any opposite view; and in controversy, whether as the assailing party, or in replying to an attack, I have been satisfied to let every one express his own belief, and direct my arguments to his own statement of it, instead of inferring a belief on his part, and then replying to a statement that I have made for him. Such a course I do not consider becoming; and especially is it to be deprecated that any should still insist upon as-

cribing a belief to one after he has repeatedly disclaimed it.

I have no objection to the order in which brother Smoot prefers to discuss the two points, election and the new birth, as he understands the starting point to be from the spiritual, not from the natural; but in our experience the order is as stated by the apostle, "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual."

Brother S. says, "I have stated that I understand Elder Durand's position to be that the Adamic man is born of God." But it requires an argument on his part to prove this to be my position, for I have not so stated it; and when it is established, as he supposes, that this is a correct statement of my belief, a basis is presented for the assertion, which two or three besides himself have made, I am credibly informed, that "Elder Durand believes that the Adamic man is changed in the new birth." But this is a position which the readers of the SIGNS know has been particularly antagonized by me. Is it therefore a wonder that I object to being convinced by even the most careful course of reasoning that I do believe it? In asserting my belief that the Savior meant the Adamic man, who is a sinner, when he said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," I do not, according to my understanding of language, say that the Adamic man is born of God, as I have explained many years ago, and shall soon more particularly explain; nor do I give up the position so long maintained by me that there is no change of nature effected in the man by the birth from above. Though any one should think that I have used expressions which can be construed to mean that there is such a change of nature, yet let such remember that I do not mean that by using such expressions, and never have.

I will now notice the distinction between the expressions, "born again" and "born of God," or "born of the Spirit." These expressions have often been used interchangeably by the clearest writers among our brethren; and so long as I know what a brother means, I do not feel disposed to cavil because he has not used the term which I would think most appropriate to express that meaning, nor even if he has used a word in a different sense from that which in my understanding it will

legitimately bear. It has not been generally observed by those who have written upon the new birth that the word "again," in John iii. 3, 7, is translated from a word meaning "from above." It has that meaning in no other place in the Bible. In First Peter i. 23 its meaning is "begotten anew." I alluded to this in my article of January fifteenth, and brother Smoot has dwelt upon that meaning as very important, which it certainly is. Yet he has taken the liberty of substituting for it, or using interchangeably with it, another expression of a very different meaning, viz., "born of God," insisting that it is of the same signification; but it is not. The words "from" and "of" have different significations, as also do the words "above" and "God." "From above" signifies the source and direction whence the second birth is experienced, contrasting it with the first. The expression, "of God," or "of the Spirit," signifies the progenitor of that which is manifested or developed in the new or second birth, which, after such manifestation, is spoken of as the "new man," the "divine nature," and "spirit." The Savior's declaration, as I understand it, is that the man who has had one birth from an earthly source, now must be the subject of, or experience, another birth, from above, from a heavenly source or direction, before he can see the kingdom of heaven. Then for the first time the Savior uses the word "of," to express the progenitor of each of the two natures developed in the same man or person by these two births from two different sources, of which he has been the subject: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Here the products of the two births are distinguished from each other; and the laws of language will not allow the personal pronoun "he" to be substituted in this place for the word "that," which the Savior has used to point out and distinguish from each other the flesh which is born of the flesh and the spirit which is born of the Spirit. It is necessary to leave the words "that" and "ye" and "born again" and "born of God" where the pen of inspiration has placed them.

In reply to my question, "Who or what is the antecedent of the pronoun 'ye' in the declaration, 'Ye must be born again?'" brother Smoot suggests that the Savior addressed this to Nicodemus in his spiritual relation as a child of God; but if that

were so, the words must have been, "Thou *hast been* born again." The form of the declaration certainly implies that he had not yet been born again, which is confirmed by the further conversation, in which he, though a master in Israel, is shown as not understanding these things, nor believing even the earthly figures, much less the heavenly realities. Again, brother S. answers my question by asking, "Who is the antecedent of the word 'ye' in the text, 'Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation?'"—1 Peter ii. 9. I will cheerfully answer this, and thereby advance my argument, and answer at the same time some other questions and arguments presented in his article. Those whom the apostle thus addressed are "the strangers scattered abroad," who are designated as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," which foreknowledge must refer to them in their earthly relation as sinners; also, "unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," which confirms the understanding, for only sinners need the sprinkling of Jesus' blood, which is here declared to be the object of their election. They are also described as "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead;" which must refer to them in their Adamic relation, for to that only can the resurrection apply. They are also exhorted, "as obedient children," not to fashion themselves according to their former lusts, in their ignorance. They are also described as redeemed by the precious blood of Christ from their vain conversation received by tradition from the elders; also spoken of as "born again, not of corruptible seed," &c., which term, I will repeat, means "begotten anew;" also exhorted to lay aside malice, and guile, and the like, and, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word; also described as "lively stones," coming unto Jesus, the "living Stone;" also, in the text referred to, described as having been "called out of darkness into God's marvelous light;" "which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." All this, which will not apply to the elect in their spiritual nature, nor to eternal spiritual children, who were never in the conditions above described, clearly designates the antecedent of that pronoun as sinners of Adam's fallen race, who were "chosen out of the

F. Turner  
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world," who were from the beginning chosen *unto salvation*, and who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as God hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

I have never intended to speak of election as being in the earthly Adam, as it is directly implied that I have done by brother S.; but of the election of Adamic vessels of mercy, as above described, in Christ. Those who were thus chosen in him are the same who "have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. i. 4, 7. But brother S. asks how they could have been chosen in Christ if they did not actually exist in him. While I would not allow the argument of any man to turn me from the plain declaration of the inspired word, yet I will say that I have always understood they did exist in him as the elect by virtue of that eternal life by which they are and were from the beginning designated as the elect of God, even *when as yet there was none of them*, none yet manifested in the earthly Adam. That the elect can be spoken of in both their spiritual and their earthly standing, and that "Adam is the figure of him that was to come," I have formerly expressed my belief at length.

Brother S. says, "Election here does not imply the taking of one and leaving of others. The whole church was elected at once in Christ before the world began." I do not remember of ever having heard the truth of the second proposition questioned by any in our fellowship. If any one has ever understood me to question it, I must have greatly failed in expressing to that one what has been in my mind since I first received a hope; and yet the word "election" does imply the taking or choosing of one or more and the leaving of others. That is the meaning of the word in our language and in the Bible. It is true that the whole church was elected; but the church is "a people called out," and none but the church were elected. The sheep were all chosen, but there were some to whom the Savior said, "Ye are not my sheep." They were left. Those who were chosen or elected to go into the ark were all saved; but were none left when they were elected? Did Paul mistake the truth or the meaning of words when, after having referred to the election, he spoke of the *rest*? or when he spoke of the election of grace as a remnant?—Rom. xi. 5, 7. The Savior said, "Ye are not of the world;" and gives as the reason, "But I have chosen you out of the world."—John xv. 19. I do not doubt that our brethren in the east generally do believe in a church actually existing in Christ before the world began, though it is an incomprehensible mystery. I have so understood the doctrine of God our Savior; but I have not understood

that this church consists exclusively of that spiritual life which was theirs in Christ eternally, and which is the gift of God through him, nor that the eternal life alone makes up the personality of the members of the church, the "members of his flesh and of his bones." If that alone constituted the church, she would have needed no washing; but the church which Jesus loved as his wife before the world began is brought to view in time as fallen, dead in sin, but still loved to the same infinite extent, so that he gave himself for her, that he might wash and cleanse her.—Eph. v. 25, 26. By the regeneration, we are carefully to remember, a washing was effected.—1 Thess. I will quote one more Scripture, which all acknowledge refers to the body of Christ, the church, and will *italicize* a portion: "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and *curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth*. Thine eyes did see my substance *yet being imperfect*; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, *when as yet there was none of them*."—Psalm cxxxix.

I will mention again that when Christ is called the elect, it is not in his character as the mighty God, the everlasting Father; but it is in his character as Mediator, and in connection with his people, who had to come under the law as a servant, and who needed to be upheld. As the elect, the Lord's Spirit had to be put upon him in order to prepare him for the work of bringing forth judgment to the Gentiles; also as the elect he comes out of Judah.—Isaiah xlii. 1; lxxv. 9. I will now insert an extract from a letter of brother Smoot, published in the SIGNS for March first, 1885, which expresses my mind: "Election is something deeper than a mere purpose; it is an actual choice, before all worlds were made, of a people existing then and there in our Lord Jesus Christ; existing in the sense in which Christ was and is, from everlasting, the life of his people. Their eternal life was there. I have no reference in this remark to their life in the earthly Adam, but to their life in the heavenly Adam. Thus Christ is called the elect of God, and the whole elect family is elected in that election. It can be readily seen that the whole human family existed in Adam as he stood in the garden of Eden before a single one of them was born; not in their individuality, but their natural life was there. So the whole elect family of God existed in the Lord of life and glory when he was set up from of old, from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. *Their spiritual life was there*. There is a manifestation of this in time, as the lines of election are drawn, in separating from the sons and daughters of Adam the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory."

I will now quote a few sentences from articles written by me in former

years: "In the new birth a new life is manifest in us, entirely different in its nature from the old, so that they stand in contrast. This is the 'new man,' to which the old or natural man is subject; for 'The elder shall serve the younger.' At first, perhaps, the subjection was so complete that we thought the old man had been made good; but we were soon undeceived. We soon learn that our nature is not changed."—Nov. 15th, 1867.

"Upon the interesting and glorious subject presented in the third chapter of John, are these thoughts correct? I submit them to you and the brethren. It has appeared to me that when our Savior said, 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God,' he was speaking of the natural man, and showing what must take place with him before he can see and understand spiritual things."—See the whole article, Nov. 15th, 1869.

"This man, then, who must be born again in order to see the kingdom of God is that natural man to whom he was speaking, &c. The first birth manifested one life, given in Adam, by which we are enabled to see, understand and engage in worldly things. The second birth manifests in the same person another life, given in Jesus Christ, by which we are enabled to see, understand and engage in spiritual things. The same man is the subject of both births, and becomes not a remodeled, but a complex being."—See August 15th, 1875.

I have made these three quotations from the much that I have written upon the subject, that it may be seen that my published sentiments are the same now as they have been for more than twenty years. During all this time also Elder Beebe wrote from time to time on this subject; and I think it right to quote a few expressions on this point from one so highly esteemed by the brethren generally as one of the clearest, most gifted and faithful expounders of the doctrine:

"Hence it will be seen that we hold, not that a company of *quicken'd spirits* are to be saved, but an innumerable company of guilty sinners, redeemed out of every tribe of mankind, are quickened by that Spirit which never was dead, which needed no quickening; it is the Spirit of life and immortality which the sinner receives in his new and spiritual birth. 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit,' as saith the Lord. We are not aware of ever having said or written anything by which an inference could be fairly drawn that we hold that the Spirit of life and immortality which was born or brought forth of God in our new birth is a *quicken'd* spirit, or that it was ever dead. It is called eternal life." "Now instead of that life or spirit being or requiring to be quickened, it is the sinner who receives it in the new birth who is quickened by it. Not that our carnal, fleshly nature is by the new birth changed

from flesh to spirit; but this life is given to us while we are still here in the flesh, so that after, as before, the new birth, the flesh retains its opposition to the spirit, producing its opposition to the spirit, producing in the subjects of this new and heavenly birth what every child of God knows to be a warfare." "The man who must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God is indeed a corrupt sinner, but neither his sins nor corruptions are born of God; for a pure fountain cannot send out impure streams," &c.—Editorial, Sept. 1st, 1878.

"Hence it is God's chosen people, who are redeemed from sin, death and hell by the blood of Christ, and predestinated to the adoption of children, after they have been born of the flesh, and fully manifested as natural men in the flesh, must be born again of the Spirit before they can see or enjoy the kingdom of God."—Nov. 15th, 1880. See also editorials in March 1st, 1880.

I ask that the editorial in July 15th, 1875, be republished in the number containing this, being peculiarly comprehensive and clear, and as presenting what I have understood to be the truth of the Scriptures, and the doctrine held by our brethren both east and west. I will here refer to the editorial in February 15th, 1868, in which his views were given at great length; and a letter of Elder Dudley in May 15th, 1868, in which he expresses "decided approval" of them. I formerly published some extracts from this letter of Elder Dudley. I cannot but wonder that no opposition to this view of the new birth so frequently expressed by Elder Beebe, and by myself and others, should have been made *from this side of the question* until after the departure of Elders Beebe, Dudley, Johnson and Theobald. Although, as was well known, there were some portions of Scripture on which they held different views, and also some "abstruse points," as Elder Johnson called them, yet who would have been allowed to suggest to either of them a disturbance of fellowship on that account? They remained in closest bonds of fellowship and love while they lived.

I ask the careful attention of our brethren everywhere to the consideration of this subject, as it is of great importance that each one should look at it for himself. While we in the east are, so far as I know, with two or three exceptions, fully in accord with the doctrine so clearly presented by our dear departed father in Israel, Elder Gilbert Beebe, there are some elsewhere who consider the point of difference made by brother Smoot on the new birth in his reply to me "a vital point." I have not so regarded it, and cannot but deprecate the importance attached to it on the part of any to the extent of breaking fellowship between those who have for years been enabled to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Where anything occurs to make manifest those whose profession has

been without the possession of grace, I count it a blessing, even though it disturb for awhile the peaceful enjoyment of fellowship on the part of true and dear brethren in the Lord. It is a blessing when, even through great storms of affliction sent upon Zion, each one is made to "cease from man," and to "look unto the hills whence cometh our help;" when each is made to remember that not by the power of man, but by the power of God, he was made to believe. But there are a few, only a few, I am glad to say, who say the doctrine that it is the sinner to whom the Savior referred when he said, "Ye must be born again," is so vital an error that they will not fellowship those who believe it, and will use all their influence to close the doors of churches against those who continue to preach it. Where Elder Beebe would not now be allowed to preach on account of this doctrine so long and so sweetly expounded by him, I do not desire to be held in fellowship; for if I know my own heart, my fellowship was with him and the doctrine he maintained from the time he led me into the baptismal water.

Your brother in the fellowship of the truth,

SILAS H. DURAND.

P. S.—The Circular Letter of the Licking Association for 1852, which I remarked in my comments upon it was, *I supposed*, written by Elder Dudley, I learn was written by Elder J. W. Thomas. Neither the Minutes for 1852 nor the SIGNS gave the author, and I judged by the style of writing; but I am told that the association book states the author.

S. H. D.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., May 4, 1888.

G. BERBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—One of the leading marks by which the believer is described in the Scriptures is that they are worshipers of God; that is, that they bow down to him, acknowledge allegiance and render obedience to him, ascribe to him honor, praise, salvation and glory, and regard with reverence the word through which he has been pleased to reveal himself to us, seeking not to reject his testimony on the one hand, nor to be wise above what is written on the other.

Another mark of this character is that they humbly accept the testimony of the Bible as containing all that can be known of God or his character, attributes and ways; and pray under a sense of humble dependence for the guidance of the Holy Spirit when they read the word, that they may rightly understand its meaning. To this "law and testimony" they bring every word of their mouth and every thought of their heart, fearing to substitute anything for the divine testimony, which they regard as true, even though it declares their profoundest reasonings to be but vain philosophy and lies.

Another mark of the believer, as described in the word of God, is hu-

mility, an absence of arrogance, and a readiness to learn. While not admitting any man as authority, yet they feel that even the smallest believer may be more right in his views of truth than they, because God may have revealed deeper things to him than to themselves, and so are disposed to treat his opinions and utterances with respect and kindness.

Another mark of a believer is that they think more of "heart knowledge" than of "head knowledge;" that is, humility, love, fear, meekness, patience, forbearance and long-suffering, with forgiveness, count more in their view than ability to understand the letter of the word and discuss the profoundest mysteries; and they count him who possesses the former wiser than he who possesses the latter. So Paul argued in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. What a wonderful chapter that is, when we come to consider it carefully!

Much has been said and written, and well said, too, of late years among the people of God about these marks which distinguish the believer in Christ, and it was not in my mind to pursue this theme in this letter, but rather to follow another all-important line of thought which has of late been much in my mind. Instead of the worshiper, the subject of the Being who is worshiped has been in my thoughts, and I have felt at times that "my meditation of him has been sweet."

Who is it that we worship? What is his character? What are his attributes? What can we know of him? It is plainly declared that no man by searching can find out God. All that can be known of him must come by revelation; and that revelation he must himself make to us. While his eternal power and Godhead are clearly revealed in his work of creation, so that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," yet in the Scriptures we find a revelation of justice, holiness, truth and mercy, of which no man could have learned by reasoning. In one way or another God has written down his name, his will, his character. That man is still in ignorance, proves not that the revelation is not full and clear and ample, but that man is a sinner. In the Bible, man's ignorance of God is everywhere ascribed to sin and enmity to God in the heart; and it is certainly most manifest that we never can know any being while we hate him and his works.

Now since all our reasonings concerning God are vain, and we cannot find him out by searching, we must turn to the Scriptures and consider their testimony concerning him. It is important that we know God in order for us to worship him. To worship a God unknown was as much idolatry among the Athenians as to worship Mars, Mercury, Jupiter or Diana; and this was manifest, for when Paul declared and described

him among them, they had no place for him in their hearts. They listened with a vain curiosity for awhile, but that was all. Their hearts were not touched. They felt no need of him. Let us then look at what the Scriptures teach concerning the God we worship; and may he help us to understand, accept his testimony, reject whatever is contrary to him, and reverence him in all his works, character and attributes. In this short article I can refer to but a few of the multitude of Scriptures wherein his name is declared again and again.

First, he is declared to be a Spirit.—John iv. 24; 2 Cor. iii. 17. As a Spirit he is declared to be omnipotent, glorious, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, eternal, jealous, compassionate, great, righteous, unsearchable, invisible, just, good, upright, holy, most high, immutable, omniscient, omnipresent, light, true, perfect, incorruptible, only-wise, immortal, faithful, consuming fire, love; and none is like him, filling heaven and earth, and is to be worshiped in spirit and in truth. I have not here given the scriptural references, but any one with a concordance can trace them all out easily.

This God is declared to be the Creator of all worlds and beings again and again. This is the very opening truth of revelation. Genesis means "the book of beginnings;" and its opening words declare the beginning of the heaven and the earth. The word "created," in the first sentence of Genesis, signifies, "to bring into existence that which did not before exist." It is a very different thing from the word "form" or "formed," used afterward, and different from the word "made," also used afterward. A creature can be said to make things or form things out of things already existing; but only God can create. In twenty or more places "creation" is ascribed to God in the Bible; and furthermore, as the creation of this natural world and all that it contains is ascribed to him first of all, so the new creation is afterward presented as being the work of God. We see here how the testimony of Paul applies: "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." So the redeemed sinner, chosen in Christ before the world was, bears the image of the earthly first, and afterward bears the image of the heavenly. Both creations are of God; first the natural, and then the spiritual.

Again, this God whom we are to worship is declared to be eternal; and let it be remembered that when we speak of God in any or all his characters and attributes, we speak of a being "alone" in dignity, dwelling in the light which no man nor angel nor spirit can approach unto, so as to share such attribute or character with him. Whatever is true of Deity, is not true in the same sense of any other being. This is true of him as Creator. No other being can

create. All other beings are creatures. So when the Scriptures again and again declare his eternity, saying that he is the eternal God, eternity is his dwelling place, he inhabiteth eternity, it is the same as saying that no other being is eternal. If eternity is his attribute, it can be the attribute of no other; for there cannot be two eternal beings. That which is eternal could not have been created, and is therefore not a creature, and is under no obligation to worship any other being, and owes nothing to any other being. This would rob our sovereign Creator of his right to be worshiped by all the intelligences of heaven, earth and hell; but because he is eternal, and has created all worlds and beings, he has a right to endless homage from them all, and it is the vilest rebellion to refuse this tribute to him. It is also treason to ascribe eternity to any other being; for he claims eternity as his dwelling place alone. Neither man, angel nor spirit can say, I never began to be. All must confess God to be their Creator and Preserver and bountiful Benefactor. I have thought often that much of the perplexity and discussion concerning an eternal church would have ceased could it have been remembered that all things save God began to be, and that eternity is the attribute of God. If there was any creation before "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," we have no account of it.

That which is eternal must also be self-existent, because there could be no being having a prior existence to create it; and so we say of our God also that he is self-existent. Eternity and self-existence are utterly incomprehensible to creatures; but so is "creation," "a Spirit," and all things that belong to Deity. We may feebly apprehend, but we cannot comprehend their meaning. Let us beware of attributing any work or character or attribute to a creature that belongs to its Maker. Only as Jesus Christ by his Spirit comes and dwells in poor, fallen sinners, can they be holden in life eternal, in holiness and love. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit only can any man be a partaker of the divine nature; and this indwelling is not for a time only, but where he once enters he abides forever. Thus it is that Jesus gives eternal life by giving himself to fallen sinners who never possessed it before. Thus it is that Jesus only has life, and they live only because he lives.

Again, let us remember that our God is declared to be immutable. Many times and in many ways he declares that "he is in one mind, and none can turn him;" that he changes not; that he is without variableness or shadow of turning. If in anything he were mutable, he could not be God. Change is either for the better or worse. If our God changed for the better, he could not have been perfect before; if for the worse, he is not perfect afterward. There seems to be change in the manner of his

working; but it is only because we see but the surface, and only a little of that, that we imagine change is taking place in God's working. Could we see all as he sees all, we should see how steady all his purposes are. Immutable in knowledge, he knows neither more nor less now than ever before. Immutable in power, his hand holds all things as it has ever done. Immutable in purpose, he purposes nothing to-day save his eternal purpose which he purposed with himself ere time was. Sitting upon his high and lofty throne, inhabiting eternity and filling immensity, what seems to us mutation is not so to him. This truth is most precious to know, and all-important in its consequences to us; for God himself has predicated our salvation upon it, saying, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Yet what vast multitudes of men who profess christianity deny this truth! How many suppose that they can by earnest and long-continued and combined prayer turn God from his purposes, and secure blessings which he had never designed to give. "Prayer is the lever that moves the power that moves the world," was the statement of one who was wise above what is written, a few years ago. But even Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, did not in Gethsemane seek to change the will of God, but submitted his will to God, saying, "Not my will, but thine, be done." All true prayer, instead of affecting the purpose of God in any way, only effects our will instead. The result is not that God says to us, "Your will, and not mine, be done;" but that we come to say to him, "Thy will, O Lord, and not mine, be done." The only ground of confidence in prayer is that we pray to a God of infinite wisdom and immutable purpose. How dare any man to pray if his importunity may change the good and perfect will of God? We do not know what to pray for as we ought; but our God does know what to give. A wise and loving Father bids his children come and freely commune with him of all that is in their hearts; not to bring him down to their mistaken desires, but that they may grow up into his perfect will. What freedom and comfort this gives in prayer. We know that our foolish desires can do no harm. What strength and comfort the immutability of God gives to us!

Connected with the above, the Scriptures also declare his omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence; that is, that he possesses all power, is everywhere present, and sees all things always. The Scriptures which assert these truths are many. I would like to quote them all, but space forbids. I have been writing with a concordance by my side, and have been astonished at the multitude of places which bear upon these things. Did not the Scriptures teach such truths, did they say the opposite, or were they silent upon them, what a maze of doubt and un-

certainty would we be involved in. We need omnipotence to uphold us in our weakness, and to hurl back our foes. We need God's presence always, in order that we may be defended; and we want to know that his eye is at all times upon us, for our peace and rest. If he be not omnipotent, there is something he cannot do. If he be not omnipresent, you and I may just now have fallen upon that place where he is not. If he be not omniscient, it may be that just now he does not see us. How could we bear either thought? for the enemy might now destroy and swallow us up quick, and we should have no refuge. O that these truths might sink into our minds! We need just such a God; and the Scriptures declare that we have just such a God. "Holy and reverend is his name."

Knowledge and purpose are also declared to be attributes of this God whom we adore; and these two must be equal. One cannot be wider than the other. All the attributes of Deity are infinite. Both of these attributes are unchangeable. They cannot embrace more nor less at one time than at another. It is said that he hath declared (or known) the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Here eternal wisdom and eternal purpose are joined together. His knowledge and his counsel go hand in hand. Furthermore, if the end from the beginning be known and determined, it is indisputably evident that all that lies along the way between must be also known and determined. I have often wondered that any who believe that God knows all things always should question his predestination of all things; for any difficulty that lies in the way of believing in his predestination, is an equal difficulty in the way of believing his foreknowledge also. If a thing is predestinated to be, it must take place. Even so it is equally true that if anything is foreknown, it also must take place, else the foreknowledge turns out to be a lie. Every prophecy in the Bible proves the foreknowledge of the thing prophesied of; and equally proves that that act or event must be, and that it is according to the eternal purpose that it must be. If the predestination of any wicked act destroys man's accountability for that act, equally so does the foreknowledge of that act. If predestination of bad things destroys prayer, even so would the predestination of good things; and if predestination is inconsistent with prayer, equally as much so is the foreknowledge and the immutability of God. If a man cannot be justly condemned for doing a predestinated wicked act, neither can he be commended for doing a predestinated good act; and so we should end in denying the predestination of anything, and the foreknowledge and immutability of God would also go by the board. All our questionings and reasonings concerning these

wonderful and mysterious themes would cease were we once filled with the spirit of Paul, as expressed in the ninth chapter of Romans. Even Paul does not undertake to explain why God found fault with Pharaoh for doing just what God had raised him up to do; but still he asserts that such was the case, and says that to question this act of Jehovah is for a worm of the dust a presumptuous questioning of his will. "Hath not the potter power [or right] over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" And there we ought to be content to leave it. The comfort of this doctrine is the comfort of the ninth chapter of Romans, and of every prophetic declaration concerning the affairs of men. It may seem a flinty rock, but God can give his people honey out of it in their need. One specially blessed part of this truth is that God foreknew his people. He saw them, and in his purpose fashioned them, when as yet there was none of them. Every member of his body, the church, was chosen from among men and written in his book before he had said, "Let us make man." Let us thank God, brethren, for his eternal purpose to save elected sinners whom he foreknew. He to-day is calling here and there his predestinated and foreknown ones out from the world, and is bringing them to his fold. Is it not a wonder of mercy that sinful creatures of God should become sons of God and live forever? How inseparable is our salvation from each and every attribute of the God who saves us! In this salvation justice, holiness, truth, faithfulness, mercy, goodness and love all are joined; and in Jesus Christ all these heavenly things are reconciled, and in the sweetest harmony work for the sinner's salvation and for the glory of God.

"This God is the God we adore,  
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend,  
Whose love is as large as his power,  
And neither knows measure nor end."

No words nor thoughts can do justice to such a theme, and mine are but broken at best. May God make them a blessing to some one.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

BUTLER, Md., Dec. 25, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I am seated with pen in hand to write some thoughts to you, and if approved, to the readers of the comforting, tried and true medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift that the pages of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in the past have been adorned with sterling truth, and especially during the year that will soon be numbered with the past. The editors and contributors have boldly withstood the errors and delusions set forth by some who, like the Galatians, are bewitched. And, with the apostle, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that

called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." This last sentence, "Let him be accursed," are words of inspiration, directed by the unerring Spirit of God, and present the awful sin of "damnable heresies," "denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."—2 Peter ii. 1. To deny the predestination of all things is, to my mind, equivalent to presenting the Deity as an imbecile, weak and wanting in all the glorious attributes which exalt him above every name that is named. And all these wondrously glorious attributes were manifested in the Son of God; "for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."—Col. ii. 9. And two great truths, upon which the salvation of every sinner rests, are involved in the absolute (fixed and unalterable) predestination of all things; which, blessed be the author and finisher of our faith, includes the sinner. And God works all things that ever we do for our good. The most atrocious sins ever committed by sinful man are recorded in the inspired word, to prove the truth of the meaning of the "all things" which "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28. Therefore the apostle continues the same subject, the sinner's salvation, and lays down foreknowledge as the beginning or starting point. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."—Rom. viii. 29, 30. When with a deep feeling sense of the depravity of my sinful heart, and earth is my bed, and a stone my pillow, and a night of felt darkness is upon me as my covering, then the doctrine has come to me in this fearful gulf of dark despair, separated in feeling as far from God as the heavens are from the earth, like the ladder which Jacob saw. One end has reached me, a sinner, of the earth, earthy, and at the other end is the God of my salvation, even "our Father which art in heaven." Though I have at times seemed given up to the devil, who, like a roaring lion, has seemed determined upon my destruction, yet some cheering angel is sent down this ladder, and I am shown that the devil is a liar from the beginning. Therefore I am bound to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, which faith embraces the doctrine in all its several points. And there are rounds or steps by which comfort comes to us upon the ladder of salva-

tion by grace. It is God's own work, and "his work is perfect." O do not, brethren, deny the attributes of Deity, or pervert the gospel, and thus leave yourselves and us, if it were true, with no plan of salvation, no ladder of grace reaching from earth to heaven, and no way whereby a sinner may be just with God.

While I desire to contend earnestly for the faith, and I have written plainly of the sin which those be guilty of who deny the doctrine in any point, and of its awful consequences, yet my desire is to "restore such an one in the spirit of meekness," considering myself, lest I also be tempted. I will refer to 2 Samuel xxiv. 1, and 1 Chronicles xxi. 1, to prove that what Satan does is as though the Lord did it; for Satan can do only what God decrees. "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah." "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." This proves that sister Boyd was correct in asserting that the devil, who is going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, can only devour those whom God has decreed he shall; the devil being as entirely under the control of God as is the wind, which he holds in his fists. "And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he [Job] is in thine hand; but save his life."—Job ii. 6. Was this a new idea with the Lord, presented to the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God, the Lord of heaven and earth, by Satan? or was it decreed, predestinated, because foreknown? Let us be very careful here; for the apostle by inspiration has made foreknowledge the foundation of predestination; therefore what God foreknew, he also has predestinated, even to the falling of a sparrow or a single hair.—Matt. x. 29, 30. And yet we hear the blasphemous thought expressed that all things are not predestinated, and that all things do not work together for good. But sin, with all its consequences, even death, is included. As the apostle says, death is yours (1 Cor. iii. 21, 22), a blessing caused by sin, through foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification and glorification; for redemption from sin requires that the Savior be foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified. O how great is the difference between those thus favored, loved of God with an everlasting love, and those who are not. The lily represents the one, and thorns the other. The one bears the image of Christ, who says, "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Yes, the glorious image of our adorable Savior is upon us through the perfect righteousness wrought for us on Calvary, when we were washed and made whiter than snow, and which is made manifest to us by the doctrine of salvation by grace. If

there is such a large proportion of me, a poor, wretched sinner, as my sins and the evil which I do, left out, not decreed, not foreknown, not predestinated, then surely I have often and repeatedly committed the unpardonable sin, and I fall to rise no more, which would be of little consequence to the great mass of mankind; but if I am what I hope I am, an elect vessel of mercy, and should fall short of an exact image to him, as one lily is to another, the God of all worlds falls with me; for both his justice and his faithfulness are pledged, as well as his promise and oath.

Dear brethren, I have written this for your inspection, to do with as your judgment directs, and to show that I am in agreement with you.

THOMAS H. SCOTT

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., March 5, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN THE LORD:—I have felt drawn out in love to you all of late, more than usual. I feel my weakness and inability so much that it makes me tremble and draw back; but if the Lord strengthens me I will be stronger than my weakness. But I will not apologize any more. I often think of a dear sister in Christ. One day I asked her if she could not say a few words in our conference meeting. Her reply was, that she was afraid she would be found out. I thought I knew her meaning, and I felt condemned. I had both tried to talk and write, and I thought they had already found me to be a weak creature. You know it is written, "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Now I feel desirous to be drawn out of myself, and to look away to Jesus, where our strength lieth. I hope it has been him who has drawn me to feel thus. I have often been asked, "Why don't you write often for the SIGNS?" All that I can reply is, that the time has not come. God forbid that I should write for the sake of writing. I have felt such a barrenness of mind for some time past that the words of the poet have come into my mind,

"All marks of grace seem to be gone,  
Which makes me fear that I am wrong."  
I have felt that the Lord hid his face from me, and I could not come forth. I was in this state of mind when Elder Vail was here on a visit and preached at the house of sister Miles. I was on the point of not going out to hear him, as I felt so cold. But I felt while he was preaching what joy and comfort there is in being found in the way. I felt that I had found him whom my soul loveth. I was made to realize that

"He safely leads my soul along;  
His loving-kindness O how strong."  
O that I could praise his name more. I was happy all the next day, and next evening I had another feast from our pastor, Elder Durand. Since then I have been calm in my mind. At times as I awake in the morning, O what sweet thoughts of heavenly things pass through my

mind. If I then had my pen in hand I could write. When I enjoy such seasons I feel like adopting the words of the poet,

"O could I speak the matchless worth,  
O could I sound the glories forth,  
That in my Savior shine."

When we have such a heavenly view of our Savior, how humble it makes us feel. In such a frame as this we could sit and sing ourselves away to everlasting bliss. O what fellowship goes out to the household of faith. Then there is no room for jealousy, no room for seeing our brother's faults. O what forbearance we feel toward each other then. We can truly say, Love hides a multitude of sins. Nor do we then feel like prying into things not revealed to us, wherein brethren differ in opinion, which often leads to confusion, and sometimes to disfellowship. O how it makes my heart ache to hear such things. It leaves the weak child of God in confusion. O that we may feel satisfied to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him, for there is safety. Who by searching can find out God? "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Romans xi. 33-36. The psalmist says, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." Let us search the Scriptures, for they testify of Jesus. O what a blessed privilege we have, that we can go to this word. Do we not find that in every trial we are called to pass through there is a portion of Scripture to meet it, to comfort and instruct us? And do we not learn many lessons through affliction? I think I can say that I have. David says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." "Thou art good, and doest good: teach me thy statutes." Cannot we look back and see the hand of the Lord in our afflictions, and say, The way he has led me has been the right way? Although the way was dark, and seemed hedged up at times, and our prayers, and cries seemed shut out from him, and we were ready to say, Why is this? Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death? yet when he lifts the veil he says, This is the way I answer prayer for grace and faith. He knows what we stand in need of, and what is for our good. Sometimes our weak judgment leads us to ask for things that would not be for our good. I often think of my dear father in family prayer, who would ask the Lord to withhold when he asked amiss. Have you not sometimes felt, dear brethren and sisters, that you have been too anxious, and that you could not be denied some things, and have prayed fervently for them? And if you

have had the evidence that the things were granted you, can you say that they have proved a blessing to you? I think I have passed through such trials, and O what a lesson it has taught me. The Lord knows what is best for us. O that I could trust him at all times. I often think how inconsistent I am. I profess to trust him, and yet how often am I found murmuring, which causes me sorrow. In his second epistle the apostle Peter exhorts his brethren to watchfulness. He says, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." He also says, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

Last evening I was reading brother John Stipp's letter to brethren Beebe. O with what humility he wrote. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." He desires the brethren to pray for him. Brother Stipp is exalted in casting his care upon him who careth for him. O what a blessed spirit. May we all be blessed with such a spirit, for it comes from the Lord. If we have not the spirit of forgiveness, how can we expect to be forgiven? Let us give heed to the admonitions, that we may live to the honor and glory of God, who has called us to repentance.

I remain your unworthy sister,  
A. M. FETTER.

77 MILL ST., MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., }  
March 1, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have penned some thoughts upon the foreknowledge and predestination of God, and of those who have kept the faith. Abel's offering was an innocent lamb, offered in faith to God, and was accepted. God took Enoch away from that wicked generation who were all washed away from the face of the earth by a mighty flood, except eight souls, who were shut up in the ark. Noah was perfect in his generations, a just man, and walked with God, doing his commandments. God has again peopled the world, as we see this day. Abraham was called out of his own country, and God made of him a great nation. He is called the father of the faithful. Then we read of Moses, who stood on holy ground, and walked and talked with God, face to face. How beautifully our beloved pastor preached from the text where God put Moses in a cleft of the rock, and covered him with his hand while he passed by. Then Moses could see God's mighty works, power and goodness. I sometimes feel that he hides his people in the cleft of the rock when danger is near; and in the tempest and darkness his hand has sheltered them from the storm and gloom. Sometimes he sends a ray of light to illumine our pathway, and shows us where our joys come from. When I think of the glory and power of our God, and of the mighty hand

that covers all his people, and the strong arm that is underneath them, and that he guides them with his eye, I sink into nothingness.

Your unworthy sister,  
MARY CAREY.

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

At the commencement of the current volume we published a special rate to our subscribers at which they might procure and forward *new* subscribers until April 1st, 1888. Many have responded, and sent us in the aggregate several hundred new names; but owing to the extremely severe weather throughout a large portion of the country, many have written us that they have not been able to get around among the brethren. We have therefore decided to extend the time, and will until further notice receive subscriptions for *new* subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

These terms apply to none but those who are subscribers. Any one whose name is not on our list, and who wishes to take advantage of these rates, can send two dollars for his own subscription, and one dollar each for all other *new* subscribers.

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We have just had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

We also have the small type book bound in cloth, which we will send post paid at price stated above. Cash must always accompany the orders. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please put a notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that my residence and post-office address is now northwest corner Eleventh and Powell Streets, St. Joseph, Missouri, instead of No. 2002 Francis Street, as heretofore.

Yours in tribulation and poverty,  
R. M. THOMAS.

## EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF  
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

#### THE SWORD OF PEACE.

"THINK not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."—Matthew x. 34.

This declaration of the Prince of peace was incomprehensible to the wise teachers of the letter of the law of Moses. From all that they could learn by the study of their Scriptures, it was their expectation that when the Messiah should come the power of his divine government would destroy all opposition, and that in consequence of his victory over sin peace would be universal throughout the earth. This expectation seemed to be warranted by the prophetic declarations concerning that glorious day when the Lord should appear in his triumphant power, as having by his own arm brought deliverance to his captive people. Hence it was thought that the divine authority of Jesus could be asserted only in sending upon earth such peace as the religious world was looking for. The same error still prevails, not only in the minds of those who are not taught of the Lord at all, but also it is frequently found working in the minds of the saints who are through faith clearly led by the Spirit into the knowledge of the truth. It is very common for them to be ready to give up all hope of salvation from their sins, when they find that the warfare which they had thought to be ended is still continued in their members. By no diligence of the natural mind can they ever understand the way in which as the redeemed of the Lord they must ever walk. Instead of peace and quietness, for which they looked, they find warfare and confusion whenever they look at the things which are seen by the natural eye. There is no discharge in that war to which they are called; neither is there a moment when they may with safety relax that vigilance which is required of soldiers upon the watch-tower in the midst of surrounding enemies. Yet they alone of all the children of Adam are blessed to know and enjoy that "peace of God which passeth all understanding." Without this sword, of which our Lord speaks in the text above quoted, there is no real peace.

In the instruction given by our Lord to his disciples in the discourse from which our text is taken, the most prominent truth presented for their learning is that they are not left as his servants to provide for their own wants, nor to defend themselves against the powers of iniquity. Being sent forth "as sheep in the midst of wolves," they were not directed to learn the science of self-defense, nor yet to be prepared to compromise truth for their own protection. While

they were to be wise as serpents, they were to be harmless (or, as in the marginal reading, *simple*) as doves. It might appear very important that they should be well prepared by careful study to defend themselves against the ferocity of their savage assailants, but no wisdom of the world could furnish them such strong defense as they have in those words which shall be given them "in that same hour;" for it is not the simple sheep that speak, "but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." It is not any uncertain event which is declared concerning the fearful enmity which the followers of Jesus must encounter. It is asserted by our Lord as positively as any appointment of God, that the nearest kindred in the flesh shall deliver up the saints unto death, and that they shall be hated of all men for the sake of Jesus. This was the appointed way in which the Lord would send his chosen messengers to the cities of Israel; and when he had extended their field "into all the world," he provided no other way of directing the saints into their several fields of labor. It was when persecuted in Jerusalem that the saints were scattered, and went everywhere preaching the word.—Acts viii. 4. It was not the way which human wisdom would have chosen; but if they had not been thus scattered abroad, who can say how the gospel would have been preached in all the world for a witness before the end should come? Whether it is understood in reference to the end of the Jewish dispensation, or to the final consummation of all temporal things, the truth of God was pledged that all these manifestations of wickedness must precede that event. So indeed all the dreadful display of depravity foretold by our Lord did precede the destruction of the nation of Israel and the desolation of Jerusalem. In like manner, but in a far more terrible sense, the visitation of divine vengeance upon a guilty world will certainly precede the final doom of all created things. But this must first be manifested in a falling away of those who are recognized as the true church of Christ in her visible organization. "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."—2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. This is as firmly fixed in the eternal purpose of God as is the ultimate salvation of his people from their sins. Therefore the saints need not be terrified when they see the wicked in great power and worldly prosperity. Neither should they be discouraged when called to endure the portion of tribulation which is given to them in this world; for in this they are but following Jesus. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as

his lord." Strange as it appears to finite sense, it is the gift of infinite love by which they are favored to endure afflictions while sojourning here in this world. They are thus sealed as joint heirs with Christ to the eternal heritage of glory which is reserved in heaven for them, and unto which they are kept by the power of God.

The peace which Jesus gives to his chosen people is not an earthly peace. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God."—James iv. 4. There can be no enjoyment of this heavenly peace by those who love the Lord Jesus, without knowing the fellowship of his sufferings in warring against the law of sin which is in their members. This experience is confined to such as are led by the Spirit. In them is displayed the power of that sword which Jesus sends. This is the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. The omnipotence of this divine sword will ever assure the peace of all who are under its protection. Secured by the ceaseless vigilance of the immutable word which has gone forth out of the mouth of the Lord, his saints are by the grace of God made to trust exclusively in him. Abiding thus under the shadow of the Almighty, they realize the truth which is written in the inspired song, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."—Isaiah xxvi. 3. This song can never be sung by any but "the righteous nation which keepeth the truth;" and even they can only enjoy the song when they realize the protection of the sword of the Spirit. By this two-edged sword the saints are not only protected from the assaults of enemies surrounding them in the world, but with equally keen scrutiny does this sword discern the secret thoughts of their own hearts. For this reason it is one peculiar mark of the subjects of this Prince of peace that they have continual grief on account of the evil which they see in themselves. This distinguishes the subjects of this kingdom from all others. The world of false religionists are troubled greatly on account of the sins of other people; but the followers of Jesus have to cry unto their Lord at every step of their pilgrimage for deliverance from the law of sin which they find in their own members, warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. They have neither time nor inclination to judge others while they are conscious of the power of this sharp sword piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and discerning with perfect clearness the very thoughts and intents of their own hearts. When under the guidance of their lusts which war in their members the saints are engaged in wars and fightings among themselves, then this sharp sword commands instant peace, as it is dis-

played coming out of the mouth of him who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. It requires no effort of carnal reason to arrange a compromise between contending brethren when this sword is applied by that Spirit which taketh of the things of Jesus and shows them unto his saints. The same voice which commanded the raging waves of the sea, saying, "Peace, be still," can bring a great calm to all the strife of tongues which at any time may disturb the courts of his chosen Zion. Not even the unfathomable depth of corruption which wells up from their deceitful hearts can withstand the sharp edge of that almighty word which Jesus speaks to recall his people from their wanderings. As a resistless sword, it instantly disarms the enmity of the carnal mind, and delivers the subjects of his grace into the liberty of the sons of God. In this liberty they realize that peace which is as a river whose mighty current is undisturbed by the little annoyances which may ripple its surface. So it is written, "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them."—Psalm cxix. 165.

To the saints in their individual experience the instruction expressed in the text is especially needful; for they are always liable to fall into the very error against which the Lord here warns them. In their exceeding joy at his manifest coming for their redemption they can imagine no possibility that anything can ever mar their peace in believing in Jesus as their Savior. They do think that he is come to send for them "peace on earth;" but it is not long before they realize that the sword cuts off this delusive confidence. Fightings without and fears within, are the sword which destroys that vain expectation. It is always a sore disappointment to them when they are practically taught this truth; but if by study it could be learned, they might read it plainly in our text, as well as in repeated expressions in the words of inspired witnesses. All through their pilgrimage in time it continues to be a mystery to the natural mind of the saints that they can never find genuine peace in any other place but in the shelter of that sword of truth by which they are required to meet the enmity of all the powers of their own nature. This is the cross which must be borne by every one who follows the victorious Captain of our salvation. Denial of self is essentially necessary to those who would walk in this highway of holiness. The fire of divine purity consumes every work and every emotion which originates in the natural mind of man. By this flaming sword, which turns every way, to keep the way of the tree of life, all hope of any sinner for acceptance in the sight of infinite justice is forever consumed and cut off. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in the light of immaculate justice as it is revealed in this terrible flaming sword. "There

is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked." This awful sentence shines in the glittering brightness of this avenging sword, and its fearful justice forbids the confidence of all who trust in works of their own for righteousness. Reason may well ask, "Who then can be saved?" Certainly this all-discerning word cuts off all trust in the righteousness which is found in obedience rendered by the sinner to the demands of justice. So our Lord himself says, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." It is the most wonderful manifestation of his omnipotence which he has revealed to mortals, that by his grace he makes sinners holy with that righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. This could not be done by the law of Moses. But by his own omnipotence and infinite grace God has fully satisfied all the demands of justice, and revealed a new and living way consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, the flesh of Jesus, whereby we have access to God. No display of wisdom and power in all the works of the material creation can be compared with this miracle of grace, by which he makes guilty sinners free from their pollution, and clothes them in the perfect righteousness wrought by his own hand. This great grace exceeds the highest thoughts of natural reason as far as the heavens exceed the little hills of earth.

Under the irresistible power of this sword of our conquering King nations are destroyed and worldly thrones are cast down. While to the eye of man the saints appear to be the most insignificant of all men, it is for their sakes that the earth is in existence; and even the universe is included when the word of the Lord asserts that "All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."—2 Cor. iv. 15. When all is darkness around the pathway of the tried and afflicted saints it seems that they are forsaken of their God, and they are unable to see that the trials under which they are suffering are given by the same great love which is the source of all their salvation. This is needful for them, that they may be blessed with the fellowship of the sufferings of their dear Redeemer. Without the experience of such fellowship they could not have the testimony which is written in that suffering, assuring them of their unity with the Lord in his triumphant glory.

The purpose for which the sword is sent on earth is included in the eternal counsel of God for the development of his love to his chosen people. This should be borne in mind by every one who would know the comfort of trusting in the ever-present hand of the Lord for strength in every time of trial. While faith rests in the knowledge that every affliction is appointed by the love of God, the tried saint can say, with Job,

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This is the comfort of believing that Jesus orders all things according to the counsel of his own will. Even when the sword of desolation falls upon our most cherished natural treasures, it is consolation beyond all earthly comfort to feel that the sword is sent by the will of our loving Lord. There is nothing but the power of divine grace which can give strength to the smitten saint by which to say, "Thy will be done." This could not be a comfort to one who did not regard the sword as sent from the throne of God. It is he alone who "maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth."

While the sword which Jesus sends develops such opposition on earth as is described in the verse following our text, that strife is confined to the earth. The same word which Jesus speaks is life to the dead sinner to whom it is sent, and a stumbling-block and foolishness to the world and to reason. This sharply defined line of discrimination will ever make manifest the carnal enmity which dwells in the earthly house of every saint. Even though he should dwell alone in the desert, these enemies are there with him. The sword only exposes that enmity which has ever existed in the carnal mind since the entrance of sin into the world. But in all the afflictions of the saints there is sweet comfort in the confidence that the sword which Jesus sends must be victorious over all enemies. It is never sent to an uncertain conflict. So it is quoted from Isaiah concerning our Redeemer, "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."—Matt. xii. 19-21.

THE NEW BIRTH.

(Reply to brother Willis Florence.)

[By special request, we reproduce the following editorial of the late editor, Gilbert Beebe, originally published in the number for July 15th, 1875.]

If all that has been published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, both editorially and communicative, has only served to confuse the mind of our brother on the subject of the new birth, the prospect is not very flattering that we shall be able so to elucidate the subject as to make our sentiments clear and intelligible to his mind. Still, hopeless though it may seem, we will try to comply with his request, and in as intelligible a way as our limited ability will permit, we will respond to his several questions. But before we proceed, we will remark that we have been laboring more than forty years through our columns to make ourself understood upon this most vitally important subject, both in giving such views as we have on those passages of Scripture which speak of being born again, and in publishing several

hundred illustrations of the new birth as experienced by those who have given good evidence of being born again, and have related the manner of God's dealings with them in making them the subjects of the new birth. In experience, if not in theory, we presume that all the children of God will understand each other in what they have experienced of the quickening power of the Holy Ghost in bringing them into manifestation among the sons of God.

Now to the several questions, in the order in which brother Florence has stated them, we will respond as nearly in the way and manner in which he desires us to answer them as we can.

Question 1. What man is it that must be born again or he cannot see the kingdom of God?

Answer. No man of all the race of mankind can see the kingdom of God except he be born again. Now if this answer is not plain, unequivocal and emphatic, we have no power of language to make it so.

Question 2. Now what man is it that Jesus has reference to in this verse? (John iii. 3.)

Answer. The declaration of Jesus to Nicodemus, in John iii. 3, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," is what we rely on to prove the correctness of our reply to the first question. We understand his words to clearly mean that no man, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, can see the kingdom of God by any power of perception belonging to or resulting from their natural birth; so that it is not only needful, but positively indispensable, in order to see the kingdom of God, or know the things of the Spirit of God, that they must be born again.

Question 3. Is it the man we read of in Genesis i. 26, or is it some other man?

Answer. Our answer to the preceding questions, we think, shows that, in our understanding, none of the human family can see the kingdom of God except they be born again. We cannot apply the declaration to Adam in distinction from his progeny, for he was not born of the flesh, but was made of the dust of the ground. He, however, we believe was as unable to see the kingdom of God without a spiritual birth as are any of his sons or daughters.

Question 4. Now, if it is not the man of whom God spake (Genesis i. 26) when he said, "Let us make man," but is some other man, what man is it?

Answer. We wish to be clear, unequivocal and emphatic in our reply to the questions submitted; but we have, in reply to every preceding question, answered this, in saying that neither Adam nor any of his posterity can see the kingdom of God except he or they be born of the Spirit.

Question 5. And does he not have to be born a second time before he can see the kingdom of God?

Answer. Yes. All who have been born of the flesh must be born again, or they cannot see the kingdom of God.

Question 6. And if he is never born a second time, how can Jesus say, A man must be born again, or he cannot see the kingdom of God?

Answer. This supposition seems to us far-fetched. Jesus would never say a man must be born again if it were not true, or if any man could see the kingdom of God by the light which he has as a subject of the first or fleshly birth.

Question 7. Can it be truthfully said of a man that he is born again, if he has never been born but once?

Answer. No, certainly not. We hold that all the children of God, which were chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and consequently before they were born of the flesh, or born again of the Spirit, were by divine appointment ordained to be brought into manifestation, first by being born of the flesh, and afterward by being born again of the Spirit, of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The very same child of God which was chosen and blessed in Christ Jesus before the world began, is made partaker of flesh and blood, by being born of the flesh. As it was indispensable for them to be born of the flesh in order to see the things of this natural world; so it is equally indispensable that the same son or daughter of the Lord Almighty who has been born of the flesh, and into the natural world, shall be born again, of the Spirit, and into the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to see it. It is not some part of the man; but the man that was identified as a child of God and heir of glory, who is made flesh in Adam their seminal earthly head, and without losing his identity in part or in whole, is in due time born of the flesh, and is flesh, in all that is born of the flesh; but he must be born again. His first birth has only developed him as partaker of the flesh by a fleshly birth; but to qualify him to see, enter, or inherit and enjoy the kingdom of God, he, without losing his identity in which he was chosen in Christ before the world was, and which identity is preserved through his connection with the flesh, is now in that same identity brought into manifestation as a child of God and an heir of glory by being born again.

Question 8. What did Jesus mean when he said (John iii. 7), "Marvel not that I said unto THEE, YE must be born again?"

Answer. He most undoubtedly meant just what he said. Ye—Nicodemus, and all those who, like Nicodemus, were already born of the flesh, though, like him, they may have been born even of Abraham's flesh; still they could neither see nor inherit the kingdom of God except they were born again.

Question 9. Does not this seventh

verse show that it is the same man to whom Jesus spake that he said must be born again?

Answer. Yes, and all other men, or they could not see the kingdom of God.

Question 10. And was Nicodemus, at the time Jesus spoke these words to him, any more or any less (except his defilement and death in sin) than the man, or rather one of them, of whom God spake in Genesis i. 26?

Answer. Although there are many points of distinction between Adam and Nicodemus, yet in the sense in which we understand our brother to mean, they were in nature the same.

Question 11. If it is this man Nicodemus that must be born again, when does this birth take place?

Answer. If Nicodemus was ever born again, it was undoubtedly when he was quickened by the Holy Spirit, and Christ was formed in him the hope of glory. This new birth did not produce flesh, nor change the flesh from flesh to spirit, but brought forth that new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; just as his being born of the flesh brought forth that flesh which was, after Adam, created of the dust of the ground. All that we possessed before being born again is born of the flesh, of corruptible seed, stamped with mortality, and is called the outward man that perishes; while all that is produced in us by the new and spiritual birth is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Question 12. Does this birth take place when one is able by the Holy Spirit to realize that he is cleansed from all sin by the blood of Christ, and to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, or at some other time?

Answer. The time of a birth is the time when something is brought forth that was previously begotten and conceived, and which, although it had existed seminally, as Levi, when in his great-grandfather Abraham's loins, paid tithes to Melchisedec, yet is not brought into manifestation until it is born. As our fleshly birth brought us forth in our fleshly nature, so our spiritual birth brings us forth in that life which was given us in Christ before the world began.

In conclusion, we hope brother Florence and all others will understand us, not as contending that some part of man is, and some part of the man is not, born again; but rather that the identity was perfect in Christ before the world began as the chosen sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty—that our spiritual, immortal and eternal life was given us in Christ Jesus, and preserved in him from everlasting; and that our natural life was given us in the earthly Adam when Adam was created and formed of the dust of the ground, and by ordinary generation our Adamic life is manifested when we are born of the flesh—of corruptible seed, in which we are involved in sin, transgression and death.

Our spiritual life is begotten and

born of God, and of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever. The two elements are developed in every child of God; the spirit which is born of the Spirit, and which cannot sin, because it is born of God; and the flesh which is born of the flesh, in which dwells no good thing—which wars against the spirit in every one that is truly born of the Spirit.

When we speak of the saints as the elect, who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began, who were saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, we express our faith in God, that his children were thus chosen and secured in Christ, and although they stood in Christ in this relation to God before Adam or any of his posterity were developed in their flesh and blood, yet, by the predestination of God, they were all to partake of flesh and blood in Adam, and be developed in time by a first and second birth, through a first and second Adam, the first birth being of the flesh, and the second of the Spirit. The same chosen vessel of God's electing love is manifested in the flesh, and afterward in the spirit. This we believe is admitted by all consistent Old Primitive Baptists. We do not hear the question mooted, What part of the vessel of mercy, the child of God, the heir of glory, is born of Adam? The child of God was perfectly identified in Christ before the world began, and that identity cannot be lost nor changed. The same child of God whose spiritual, eternal life was hid with Christ in God, had also a life in the earthly Adam. If we say Paul was chosen in Christ before the world began, but this same Paul had a fleshly or earthly existence in the earthly Adam, to be developed through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Benjamin—and although many generations were required to bring him into manifestation by being born of the flesh, yet when born he was the same Paul which was chosen in Christ and ordained as a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ among the Gentiles; and when he was in his sins, and breathing slaughter against the saints, his identity was not changed. And when it pleased God to reveal his Son in him, or in other words, when he was born again, he was the same Paul that was chosen of God in Christ before the world began, created and born of the flesh after the world began; now when the fullness of time was come he is called by grace, quickened by the Spirit and born of God, and he is still the same Paul. And when his mortal put on immortality, and he was received into the joys of his risen and exalted Lord, he is the same Paul whose name was written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. We have no occasion to ask what part of Paul

was elected, predestinated, called, quickened, and is now gone from all his labors to wear the crown of righteousness in heaven. Not a part of Paul. Paul and all the sons of God pass through the numerous changes of which we have spoken, but through all, their individuality and identity is preserved; and when he shall change our vile body, and fashion it like the glorious body of our adorable Redeemer, the identity will be the same. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; still it is Paul's body, not the body of somebody else. Nor will it be some part of Paul, but the very Paul which was saved in Christ before the world began.

That which is born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, cannot be corrupted, or it would not be incorruptible. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him;" and that seed being incorruptible, cannot be corrupted; for it is not only incorrupt, but it is incorruptible—not susceptible of corruption. Therefore, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."—1 John iii. 9. Now if our fleshly nature is born of God, the fact may be demonstrated by its incorruption and immaculate purity. And if our fleshly nature is born of the Spirit, it is spirit, and has not to wait for the resurrection to put on incorruption and immortality; nor would it be said, I with my flesh serve the law of sin; nor, In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. We would not find a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members; for there would be no such law in our members if they were born of incorruptible seed. But our corrupt, fleshly nature is born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit, and therefore cannot inherit the kingdom of God.—1 Cor. xv. 50. In every christian are found two conflicting elements; the one is born of God, and is holy; the other is born of the flesh, and is unholy, and wars against the spirit. It is labor lost to attempt to explain the nature of these two conflicting elements to those who do not find them warring in their own experience. No well instructed christian will contend that his depraved, carnal nature is born of God, or that his spiritual, incorruptible and immortal life is born of the flesh. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

We submit what we have written, hoping that it may relieve the mind of brother Florence. We may have failed to understand his inquiries, or the special cause of his perplexity; but we hope our brethren will all ask counsel of him who giveth wisdom and upbraideth not.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Baltimore Association of Old School Baptists, convened with the church at Black Rock, May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1888, to the churches of which she is composed, sends greeting in the Lord.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—Upon this, another one of our annual meetings, we desire to speak to you, as has been our wont for so many years, in the language of brotherly love, and to call your attention again to some of the things that pertain to our great salvation. We desire to do this, not only because it has been our custom, but because we love the theme, and also have you in our hearts. When we love both the theme and those to whom we speak, it becomes a delight and a joy to speak, and can never be a burden. May love make our present labor light.

There have always been two opposing theories in the world as to the way of salvation. On the one hand, men have earnestly contended that the divine life is self-originate; that by proper culture it can be developed in any or all men; that man is not really dead, but only asleep, or in a trance, or dormant, and needs but to put forth proper effort to ascend the heights of heaven, and become holy "as he is holy." On the other hand, there have always been some who believed that divine life is not ours by nature, but that if we ever possess it, it must enter into us from without, and raise us up by its own divine power. These two theories still exist in the minds of men. On the one hand, much is made of the supposed innate powers of men, of their natural dignity, honor and glory, of that which they can be or do; and human ambition, pride and self are motives constantly appealed to. Religion, salvation, heaven and happiness are put upon the same foundation as are the things of this world; and no miracle is recognized in the work of salvation and regeneration at all. To this class belonged in the early days the Jews, who by right living and rituals expected future life; and the Greeks, who by study and reason expected to arrive at a knowledge of God. To this class to-day belong all those who suppose that by religious training or religious profession in schools or seminaries, or at the public altar, or by belief in some form of doctrine, they may be saved. The Jew and the Greek of Paul's day were but types of classes of men who still live among us; though it is often true that the children do not recognize their fathers, and will not acknowledge the relationship.

On the other hand, much is made of the power and wisdom and grace of God; and to him is ascribed the whole work of regeneration and salvation. Man's sinfulness and entire insufficiency is insisted upon, and the fullness and miracle-working power of the grace of God is declared to be

the only hope of man. The watchword of this class and the key-note of all their confessions has ever been "Salvation is of the Lord;" and negatively, they have insisted that salvation is not, in the least part of it or in any degree, by human teaching or human works. To this class belonged in early days the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, who were all justified by faith. To this class belonged the Waldenses, the Albigenses, and the English and Welsh Baptists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the early Baptists of this country; and to this class we profess to belong. This faith our fathers affirmed at this very place, at a meeting held on Friday, September 28th, 1832; and we their children and grandchildren desire to reaffirm the same to-day.

A wide field of scriptural proof and scriptural illustration opens itself before us as we thus speak. Into all this field we cannot enter. In one portion of it only shall we endeavor to glean a few sheaves for our mutual comfort and instruction. We would at this time consider the two opposites, death and life, for these are common scriptural words, and are used frequently to present the condition of men as they stand either upon the one hand or the other before God; and as a text, which seems to us to include as much, or perhaps more, than any other, we would call your attention to that recorded in First John v. 12: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." While we desire to call special attention to these words, we yet would here refer to many other Scriptures, which contrast or set forth death and life with regard to the condition of fallen man on the one hand, and redeemed and regenerated man on the other. "Thy dead men shall live."—Isa. xxvi. 19. "Let the dead bury their dead."—Matt. viii. 22. "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live."—John v. 25. "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—John xi. 25. "He is judge of quick and dead."—2 Timothy iv. 1. "Dead in trespasses and sins."—Eph. ii. 1; Col. ii. 13. "Dead while she lives."—1 Tim. v. 6. "Passed from death unto life."—John v. 24. "Alienated from the life of God."—Eph. iv. 18. "Brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. i. 10. "This life is in his Son."—1 John v. 11. These and many other expressions set forth the truth that fallen man is dead to God and all spiritual things, while the redeemed man is alive to God and all spiritual things.

How then shall we define death and life? What do we mean, what does the Bible mean, when it says of man, "He is dead," or, "He is alive?" When we say of anything, "It is living," what is it that we mean by what we say? Is it not that the person or being of which we speak can commune or correspond with certain

things around it? For instance, we say of a tree, "It is living." What do we mean, but that it has communion or correspondence after its kind with the earth, with the elements of water and air, and with the heat and light of the sun? If we say that it is dead, we mean that all such correspondence has ceased. Suppose we say of a bird, "It is alive." We mean the same thing, namely, that it can correspond or commune with what is around it; and so of men naturally, we say, "He is alive," meaning the same thing. On the other hand, if we say of any of these things, "It is dead," we mean that it is not in communion and cannot commune with anything around it. Furthermore, it is very manifest concerning all these things that they may be alive to some things, while dead to others. The tree is dead to many things to which the bird is alive, as, for instance, the power of motion, seeing, hearing, &c.; and so we can say of the bird that it is alive, while yet it is dead to many things to which man is alive.

Death, then, means separation from anything whatever, while life means communion or correspondence with that thing; and, as just shown, anything may be alive to some things, while yet it is dead to others. This is precisely what the Scriptures teach concerning man. Even while he is alive to all the visible creation of God, and can grasp the world and make it minister to his needs, he yet is dead to that other and better world—the spiritual. He can commune with nature, can eat and drink for the nourishment of his body, can rejoice his heart by mental researches into the deep things of earth; but yet to the spiritual world above he is as dead as is the tree or the bird to much of this natural world. *Man does not and cannot commune with God. He does not and cannot know God. He does not and cannot love and serve God.* This, then, is what the Scriptures mean when they testify that man is dead to God. On the other hand, when they declare of any man that he lives, or is alive to God, they mean that God communes with him, that he receives supplies of blessing from God, that he knows, loves and serves God, and that, in short, he is a partaker of the divine nature.

If, then, man is dead, how shall he live? By what power shall this change be accomplished? Has man power in himself to lay hold upon the things that are spiritual? Can the dead take hold of life? The scriptural answer is thus stated: "And you hath he quickened."—Eph. ii. 1. "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God."—John v. 25. "The Son quickeneth whom he will."—John v. 21. This quickening or making alive, then, is of God; but aside from this, God has declared the same truth in all his natural as well as his spiritual creation. Take for instance the mineral or dead vegetable matter that goes to build up the body of the

living plant. How shall this dead, inert matter live? Can it by its own inherent power climb up into the living plant and live? No; the living plant must reach down to it. The life from above must raise it up, and change its vile form into the beautiful form of the plant. Consider the plant again with reference to the animal world or kingdom. The plant cannot reach up to animal life, but this life must stoop down to it, and take hold of it, and build this vegetable substance up into the animal body, filled with animal life; and so this lower, mortal life cannot climb up to the spiritual, but the spiritual life must come down to us and lay hold upon us. It is God who quickeneth the dead; and the second Adam (Jesus) is made a quickening Spirit. Life is not self-originate. Plant life is not, animal life is not; and the Scriptures abundantly inform us that spiritual life is of God. It is given of God, and is maintained by his power. To this also agree the types and illustrations of the Old Testament. When Ezekiel saw in vision the valley of bones, dry, and very dry, the question was asked, "Can these dry bones live?" Looking at the dry and disjointed bones, the answer must be, No. There was no power in them to live. God must breathe upon them, and at his breath they lived. Life must come into them from without. This is the lesson which we have been trying to enforce. In the beginning, when man was formed dust of the ground, while as yet God had not breathed into him the breath of life, it is evident that in him there was no power to originate life. If he lived at all, that life must be given by his Creator. God breathed life into him. This tells the whole story. Thus again we are taught that life and salvation are of the Lord. Salvation must come from heaven, not from the earth. That which is above acts upon that which is below; not that which is below upon that which is above. Man has no power over the spiritual world, but the spiritual world has power over him. The mineral world has no power to resist the vegetable life which seizes upon it; and the vegetable matter has no power to resist the animal life which lays hold upon it. Even so man cannot resist the power of this spiritual life—cannot resist God. When God says, "Let there be the light of life," there the light of life is. The man that was dead lives. The dry bones are clothed with flesh and sinew, and stand upon their feet and live. God is the author and man is the subject of this change, this wonderful transformation, which finds its final consummation when these vile bodies shall be changed.

The Scriptures everywhere make a broad distinction between life and form. Religious observances and morality are not life. He that has life may and will practice such observances and live morally; but these are not life, and do not produce life.

A man may live a life free from blame, upright and honest, kindly and charitable, self-contained and self-restrained—a life whose outward form shall be better than that of his neighbor; and yet that neighbor may be spiritual, a partaker of the divine nature, while he is still of the earth. I may hold in one hand a piece of crystal, and in the other a tiny plant. The crystal shines with the high polish that is upon it, while the plant may seem not worthy to stand beside it; and yet the plant possesses that which the crystal has not—life. The crystal can never be other than what it is; while the plant is going to develop greater and still greater powers and beauties. There is a life in it that is working out great results. The moral man may take on great beauty of form, but he is still of the earth, earthy. He does not partake of the divine nature—he does not live. The spiritual man, on the other hand, may live a seemingly inferior life. The beginning may be very small, but still there is life, and that life shall conquer all things. Spirituality makes a man moral, and finally he shall be perfected; but morality cannot make a man spiritual. Life, life from the dead, he must have. We might take a block of marble, and hew and chisel and color it until it should be a perfect image of a friend; but yet we shall never seek to commune with it, because it, after all, has not life. Our friend has life. So there may be religious profession and outward right living, but yet there may be no life. Life, life is the only key to unlock the mysteries of God; and so Jesus said, Except a man be born again he cannot see, cannot enter, the kingdom of God. Teaching, training, morality, will not do. "Marvel not"—"ye must be born again," born from above. We have seen people whose faces dead were more beautiful than others who were living; but yet they were dead, and their beauty could not last. The living would endure, and perhaps increase, while the beauty of the dead must perish. Of the believer it is said, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him," &c. But of the moral man, it doth appear just what he is and just what he shall be. The latter is the beauty of the dead, the other the beauty of the living. It doth not yet appear what he shall be. Let us in the midst of failures, which we see in ourselves and others, remember that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Let the crystal be polished until in the sun it shines with every primal color, and yet it is but a dead thing after all. So it is with the merely moral man. Yet this is all the life which millions upon millions know. Brethren, our imperfections are many, but being made partakers of the divine nature, we live and commune with God; and thus living and communing with him, we shall grow up into him and be like him.

But the legalist, the moralist, the wise man of the world, and the scoffer, say, "What is this life of which you speak? We cannot see it; we cannot grasp it; we cannot comprehend it." Very good. No one has said that we can comprehend it; but in this respect it does not differ from any other life. We know no more of natural life than we do of the spiritual. We hear and see effects, but the thing itself eludes our grasp. Of both the one and the other it is true that, like the wind, it blows where it lists, and we hear the sound thereof, but can tell no more. We know that we live naturally by certain evidences; even so we know there is a spiritual life by certain evidences. This is all that we can know. If the scoffers and legalists and moralists named above will tell us anything about this natural life, then we will bring evidence of the same thing concerning our spiritual life. We cannot show any one the wind, its beginning or its ending; but we point to its effects. So of life, both natural and spiritual.

The Scriptures give us a name for this spiritual life. They call it Christ. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." In the text at the beginning of this letter we read, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." God manifest in the flesh is our life. Jesus is the corn of wheat which, having life in itself, falls into the ground, which has no life in itself, and thus no longer abides alone, but grows up a mighty plant, bringing forth much fruit to God. Jesus is the life which fills the whole plant, which without him was simply dead, and, if such a thing were ever possible, without him would be dead again. The life is one thing, and the plant another; but thanks be to God, once united, they can never be separated. "Because I live, ye shall live also." This is all the pledge we have. This is all the pledge we need.

Seeing this truth plainly, we shall see also that no means nor instrumentalities are needed nor can possibly be used in this giving of life to the dead. It is simply, He that hath the Son of God, he that hath not the Son of God. If Jesus is with you, you have life; if Jesus is not with you, there is no life in you. Jesus comes traveling in the greatness of his strength. If you have the Son of God, he came to you in this way. As well think of bringing down rain from the clouds of heaven by simply throwing water into the air, or to create a tempest by waving a fan, as to suppose that the movements of this conqueror, the King of kings, by any means of human device whatever, can be controlled and directed in his coming. As a conqueror he still comes to whom he will; and when he comes there is life.

From the text also we learn that man without Christ is dead, but that the same man with Christ is alive; and so to the same effect Jesus said,

"I give unto them eternal life." Evidently these sheep were destitute of life before, or, as the apostle has testified, were without Christ; and so, as Jesus said again, the hour is now when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live. What a contrast! Dead; alive! Without Christ; with Christ! Man is not only to be saved, but he is saved. He not only is to have Christ, but he has Christ. He not only is to live, but he now lives. The "quickening Spirit" comes to a man dead, and the man lives; lives unto God, lives the life of Christ, and lives the life he now lives in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God. Thus the whole work of salvation, including the atonement, the quickening, the keeping power of God, the resurrection and final glory, is wrought out for and then in sinners such as we, sons and daughters of a fallen Adam. How can we adore and praise our God enough for all these riches of grace in Christ Jesus, who is our life!

In conclusion, we desire to call attention to the vast difference between the dead and the living, as to what we expect to see in them. None of the works of the Lord are in vain. When it pleases him to give life of any kind, that life is found to be an active power, producing results after its kind. He that possesses natural life manifests it in a natural way; by the pulsation of the heart, by breathing, by various sensations, by eating, moving, speaking, thinking, and by a knowledge of things about him. On the other hand, the dead know not anything. They possess neither the power of sensation nor of movement. They lie among the dead, in the tombs, and not among the habitations of the living. They decay and crumble to dust, and their presence is offensive to the living. We do not expect to see a living man make his dwelling place among the tombs, nor make companions of their pale inhabitants.

All this is also true when we speak of men dead in sins, and men alive unto God. The proper abode of the dead is among the dead, and not among the living; and the proper place of the living is among the living, and not among the dead. We expect to see saints living a higher and heavenly life. Sons of God will be led by the Spirit of God. The living will act, move, think, speak, in the new life which is his. As the natural man loves the things of this natural life, so the spiritual man must love the things of the Spirit; and what a man loves, that will he seek after. Having a life which is from above, he will love the things that are above, and will seek the things that are above. We have a right to expect that such a man shall not be a drunkard, a thief, a slanderer, a miser, a covetous man, an unjust man, or an extortioner. We may expect him to be guileless, humble, truthful, kindly, peaceful, sober and God-fearing. As the natural man

lives with an eye to his natural advantage and to the things of this world, so we may expect the spiritual man to live with an eye to his spiritual good and to the glory of God. The apostle sums it all up when he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." As a child bears the image of his father, whose life is in him, so christians may be expected to bear the image of Christ, who is their life; and this is the promise of the gospel to them, to be like Jesus. The perfection of this life in them is not seen yet, but still we shall trace some outlines of the perfect Savior, if indeed he dwells in us; and in the end we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Toward this glorious end and fruition of our hope are we journeying. The end is sure. Let us then lift up our heads and rejoice, and press forward in the race. Brethren, here is good reason why we should not be conformed to this world. If any of us are asleep among the dead, let us awake and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give us light. Let us not be conformed to this world, but let us be transformed by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. May we, first of all, realize that we belong to God, and then that all we have is his. Thus shall it appear true in each of us that "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

#### CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Baltimore Association of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists, assembled with the church at Black Rock, Baltimore County, Md., May 16th, 17th and 18th, 1888, sendeth love and fellowship to the associations and meetings of the same faith and order with whom she corresponds.*

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST OUR SAVIOR:—You are commanded, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Even so we rejoice to record that your messengers have come to us bearing loving messages from the God of love; proclaiming to the chosen of Adam's race the riches of their inheritance, and their indisputable right to the heirship that cannot be taken from them, because of its being a joint heirship with their living Head, the great Conqueror of sin, death and hell. May we all endeavor, as much as in us lies, "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," looking unto him who hath all power in heaven and in earth for strength; exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see error, both of the new and the old devices of men, being promulgated by some calling themselves Baptists. There have never attended our association more able minis-

ters of the word, representing so many associations, as we have with us now; and all see eye to eye, and all have proclaimed the same glorious doctrine of salvation by grace alone, to the comfort of every saved sinner who has been privileged to be present to hear.

Our next association has been appointed to be held with our sister church at Tuscarora, Juniata Co., Pa., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in May, 1889, where we expect to again meet your messengers and receive your messages with joy.

WM. GRAFTON, Mod.

F. A. CHICK, Clerk.

JUST RECEIVED.

WE have just received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

PRICE REDUCED.

BROTHER J. B. Hardy, of Wellsford, Kiowa Co., Kan., has authorized us to publish a reduction in the price of the "Five Days Debate." For reduced prices and full particulars see advertisement on last page.

"THE EDITORIALS."

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

MARRIAGES.

ON Tuesday, May 8, 1888, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, at his residence in Occoquan, Va., Mr. James Posey and Miss Lydia F. Beavers, both of Prince Wm. Co., Va.

ON April 25, 1888, by Elder Joseph L. Staton, at the Baptist parsonage, near Newark, Delaware, Mr. Wm. S. Alexander, of Wilmington, and Miss Addie L. Armer, of New Castle County, Del.

ON May 22, 1888, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at his residence in Middletown, N. Y., Mr. Wm. B. Monell and Miss Jennie Warn, both of Middletown, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

"HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I."—Psa. lxi. 1, 2.

DIED—August 5, 1887, at the residence of her parents, in Tracy, Platte Co., Mo., after a protracted and complicated illness, Mrs. Lena Magee Bannister, wife of Professor W. A. Bannister, and daughter of brother John W. and sister Anna Magee, all of Platte County, Mo.

Mrs. Bannister was born April 1, 1867, and was married to Prof. Bannister Nov. 24, 1886. She was a granddaughter of the late Deacon John T. Murdock, of Platte County, Mo., and of Deacon B. W. Magee, now of Pawnee City, Nebraska.

She was indeed a most estimable woman, well beloved by her relatives and friends, and highly respected by all who knew her.

She had never made a public profession of religion, but has left many comforting evidences of the work of grace, and of the teachings of the Spirit. Being of a retiring disposition, and of a very quiet demeanor, she was not inclined to talk

much, but would give expression to her feelings in her writing, some of her essays containing precious and touching gems of thoughts; also in her selections of poetry in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and of communications there; and of hymns in the Baptist Hymn Book. She often requested her parents to ask me to speak upon certain portions of Scripture. She was a very delicate woman, and much of her time in rather poor health, but bore her afflictions with meekness and quietness; and although she appeared to cling to life to the very last, yet she seemed aware that she could not remain long in her condition, and to have no dread when the end should come. I was not permitted to be with the dear bereaved ones on the solemn occasion of her death and burial, being absent at the time; but her grandfather, Deacon B. W. Magee, being present, was called upon and spoke very feelingly in prayer, and made some very appropriate remarks.

She leaves the husband of her youth and her choice, to whom she had been married only a few months, her afflicted parents, to whom she was most devotedly attached, and a darling sister, whom she tenderly loved, her aged grandfather and a goodly number of sorrowing relatives and sincere friends, to mourn her early departure from the shores of time; but to them all I will say, Dearly beloved, though it is grievous and trying to give up one so young and so lovely, yet it is comforting to know that she is forever freed from sin and sorrow, toil and pain, sickness and death, at rest and peace in Jesus: therefore sorrow not as those who have no hope. Remember that the dear Lord doeth all things well.

"What though we can't his goings see,  
Nor all his footsteps find;  
Too wise to be mistaken he,  
Too good to be unkind."

Death is a conquered foe; the grave is a vanquished enemy; Jesus hath gained a glorious victory; and, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Jesus, thou Prince of life,  
Thy chosen cannot die;  
Like thee, they conquered in the strife,  
To reign with thee on high."

R. M. THOMAS.

St. JOSEPH, Missouri.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please insert in the SIGNS the following obituary of sister S. E. Kable, who died at her home in Jefferson County, West Virginia, April 24, 1888, in the 70th year of her age. Sister Kable suffered from dyspepsia and other complications for many years, which shattered her nervous system very much; but she was generally able to attend to her domestic affairs, until a short time before she died. Her last sickness culminated in paralysis of the stomach, from which she suffered intensely at times, until relieved by death. It seems, from a paper written by her in 1886, which was found among other papers after her death, that she was expecting the summons for her departure then, and was resigned to go when it was the Lord's will to call her to her eternal home, though she regretted to leave a devoted husband. In the same paper she also expresses a desire that when called hence she might be clothed upon with that righteousness which is from above, which, she added, is the only salvation for the sinner.

Sister Kable was a highly esteemed and worthy member of Ebenezer Church, in this (Loudoun) county, for many years, being baptized by Elder Trott some time before the late war. While she was kind and courteous to those who differed from her religiously, she was firm and uncompromising in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Her house and heart were always open to receive and entertain her brethren and friends. She will be greatly missed in

the neighborhood where she lived, and also by Ebenezer Church and an extensive acquaintance of brethren and friends, but especially by brother Kable, her aged and devoted husband, who is now bereft of her companionship, which he enjoyed many years. May the Lord sustain and comfort him in this great bereavement, and give him and us resignation to his righteous will, and patience to wait all the days of our appointed time, till our change come, is our desire and prayer.

Yours in hope,

E. C. TRUSSEL.

SNICKERSVILLE, Va., April 28, 1888.

DIED—March 23, 1888, after a protracted illness, at Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., Mrs. Phebe Jenkins Keator, second wife of Joel Keator, in her sixty-sixth year.

Mrs Keator's health had been failing for a number of years, and for a few years back she was unable to attend to her domestic affairs, which was very trying, no doubt, to our aged brother; yet he was able to bear this trial by strength given him from on high. She was not a professor, but we trust she has made a happy exchange from this sinful world to a world of light. Brother Keator told me that for the past two years she had seemed very desirous to hear the Scriptures read, and appeared conscious of the work and power of the Lord. Our brother's house is lonely, he being alone in it, although he has two grown sons, who have families. It no doubt seems more lonely as his only daughter (by his first wife), Mary Keator Warren, wife of John Warren, died quite suddenly on February 25, 1888, at Batavia Kill, aged fifty-one years. So we see that death does its work, as declared in the Scriptures, and the living go mourning. May the Lord comfort the survivors, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake.

J. D. HUBBELL.

DIED—In Southampton, Pa., January 18, 1888, Mrs. Jane Krewson, widow of Christopher Krewson, in the eighty-fifth year of her age. She had been for many years a member of the Old School Baptist Church of this place, and will be much missed, for she never forgot the church. The things of the kingdom appeared to be first in her mind. She was always ready to do her share in anything for the church; and she remembered the poor, and was always good to them. She had been very feeble for about three years. She lived alone, and as her eyes were very poor, so that she could read but little, she had much time for meditation. But she is now at rest. She sleeps that blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep.

We miss her from her little home;  
She was our constant care;  
But now she's gone to heaven above,  
To be forever there.

RACHEL M. HOGELAND.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In sending you the above notice I will add that the last time I saw sister Krewson before her death she spoke very sweetly of her hope and confidence in the dear Savior, repeating some verses of hymns and portions of Scripture that were precious to her. At her funeral, January 21st, I spoke from the words recorded in Romans vi. 23, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Bucks Co., Pa.

DIED—At his residence in Paterson, N. J., on Thursday, February 23, 1888, brother Hiram Payne, in his sixty-ninth year. His disease was paralysis and softening of the brain, which affected his reason; but in his rational moments he expressed a desire to depart and be

with his dear Redeemer, in whom was all his trust. He was a dear lover of the truth, salvation by grace alone, and earnestly contended for the same until his mortal powers failed. He was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y., on Sunday, June 12, 1881, by Elder Benton Jenkins, being the first candidate he baptized after his ordination to the work of the ministry.

The funeral services were held in Paterson, and were conducted by Elder Jenkins, after which his mortal body was deposited in a cemetery within the limits of that city.

He is survived by his companion, our sister, who is a beloved member of the church at Middletown, N. Y., and also children and other relatives.

"He trod the shades of gloomy death,  
Could set his seal that God was true;  
Finished his course and kept the faith,  
And died with glory full in view."

BROTHER Henry L. De Priest died at his residence near Scalesville, Warrick Co., Ind., March 13, 1888, of erysipelas in the face and head.

Brother De Priest was born in Gibson County, Indiana, May 31, 1855. He received a hope in Christ four or five years ago, and united with the South Fork Regular Predestinarian Baptist Church, September 4, 1886. He was chosen deacon on September 10, 1887. He was a humble, orderly walking christian, a good citizen, honest and upright in all his dealings, a kind husband and indulgent father. In short, none knew him but to love him. He seems to have been well apprised that his time to bid adieu to all earthly things had come. He told his wife, about a week before he died, that he was going to die. His face was so badly swollen that he could not get his eyes open. His wife said to him one day while he was sitting up in bed, "Henry, you cannot see much." He said, "No. I have some very bright seasons in the Spirit, but all earthly things are dark." He repeatedly admonished her and those who were around his bed to trust in Jesus, and at one time repeated those beautiful lines,

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust him for his grace;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face."

He leaves behind him a weeping wife and three children, with the church and numerous friends and relatives, to mourn our loss. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope, for we trust our loss is his eternal gain, and would say, Thy will be done, O Lord.

Your unworthy brother, and father-in-law of the deceased,

C. C. HEATH.

SCALESVILLE, Ind.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Southampton Church, Bucks County, Pa., on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June (May 30th), 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming from the east will take train at the foot of Liberty Street, New York, at 1.30 p. m., on Tuesday, and come to Bethayres, on the Bound Brook R. R., where they will be met. A train leaving New York at 4.00 p. m. will be met for those not able to come earlier.

Those coming from other directions will take train at Third and Burk Streets depot, Philadelphia, at 4.00 p. m., Tuesday, and come to Southampton Station, where they will be met. Also, trains will be met on Wednesday at 10.20 a. m., at Southampton.

All lovers of the truth are affectionately invited to meet with us.

I. P. HELLINGS, Church Clerk.

The Warwick Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June (6th), 1888, and continue in session until Friday evening following.

Brethren and friends coming east or west by the New York, Lake Erie & Western Rail Road will change cars at Greycourt, taking the Lehigh & Hudson River Rail Road to Warwick, where they will be met on Tuesday, on the arrival of the evening train, about seven o'clock. This train leaves New York City, foot of Chambers Street, about 4.00 p. m. The first train in the morning, Wednesday, both east and west, arrives at Warwick about 9.30, in time for the meeting.

Those who expect to return to New York will find it to their advantage to buy excursion tickets, good for thirty days. We hope to see many brethren and friends present.

WM. L. BEEBE, Pastor.

The Chemung Old School Baptist Association will be held, if the Lord will, with the Charleston & Sullivan Church, in Tioga County, Pa., on Wednesday before the third Sunday in June (13th), 1888, and continue in session the two following days.

Those coming west of Corning on the Erie or D. L. & W. R. R. will get off at Corning, and there take the Corning, Cowanesque & Antrim R. R., to Wellsboro, Pa. Those coming east of Elmira on the D. L. & W. or Erie R. R. will change at Elmira, and there take the Tioga & State Line R. R., a branch of the Erie, to Lawrenceville, and change to the Corning, Cowanesque & Antrim R. R., to Wellsboro. Those coming from the south via Williamsport will take the Pine Creek R. R. at Williamsport for Wellsboro, where all trains will be met on Tuesday before the meeting, and friends cared for.

M. VAIL.

For the information of all who may wish to attend the Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon, for the year 1888, we will state that by an arrangement of the churches composing said association a change has been made in the time of holding the same. Therefore the 35th annual meeting of said association will be held with the Siloam Church, at Harmony School House, some three miles northeast of Mt. Angel, in Marion County, Oregon, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1888, worship to begin at 11 o'clock a. m.

Those coming on the Narrow Gauge R. R. will be met by brethren at Mt. Angel station with teams to convey them to the place of meeting.

All Old School or Primitive Baptists are cordially invited to attend our association and join with us in the solemn worship of the Lord our God.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.  
E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

The Sandusky Old School Baptist Association will meet with Columbia Church, at Kelly's Corners, Michigan, on Friday, June 8, 1888.

Those coming by way of Toledo will change at Union Depot for Napoleon, Michigan, where they will be met. Those coming from the southwest will change cars at Hillsdale, Michigan, for Woodstock, which is near the place of meeting. All should take first morning train, Thursday, June 7th, to meet connection. A cordial invitation is extended, especially to ministering brethren.

J. P. CONAWAY.

The Turkey River Association will be held at Hampton, Franklin Co., Iowa, be-

ginning on Saturday before the first Sunday in June, 1888, and continue the two following days.

Hampton is situated on the Iowa Central Rail Road, and a branch called D. D. R. R., from Waverly west.

A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of Bible truth.

PAUL SOHNER.

### YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in June (23d and 24th), 1888. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters, especially brethren in the ministry.

Those coming by rail will be met at Griffin's Corners Station on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning, the day of the meeting.

It is expected that the Halcott Church will unite with us, and not have any yearly meeting there this year.

O. F. BALLARD, Clerk.

### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

W. R. Waddill 2, Levi Price 2 50, F. W. Bland 2 50, David Tidwell 2 50, W. T. Conner 2, Mrs Carrie Williams 2, A. F. Honeycutt 2, W. H. Spier 2, Eld James W. Futch, 2 50, Lacy Adams 2, S. B. Acock 2, Robt T. Proctor 2, W. Thomas 2 50, Geo. H. Turner 2, J. M. Matthews 2 50.—Total \$33 00.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1888.

NO. 12.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

NORTHPORT, Ala., March 4, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Notwithstanding the subject of the new birth has been so much and so ably discussed, both from the pulpit and through the press, even from time immemorial, I cannot well resist the impression to write a few lines upon the same subject, both for the purpose of relieving my own mind, and with the hope that it may be blessed to the comfort of others.

Jesus, in his conversation with Nicodemus, plainly says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Ye must be born again." From these declarations of the Son of God it is clear that the new, the second, the spiritual or again birth must be effected before a man can enter into the kingdom of God; and of such characters that have been thus born John says, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Of the same characters Peter says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Thus in these declarations we have set forth the idea that before any man can see or enter into the kingdom of God there must be a new, second, or spiritual birth; and that birth can be effected alone by the power and Spirit of the eternal, immutable, all-wise and omnipotent God. To me it is not so much a matter of the extent of this birth; but the important question with me is, Am I a subject of this birth? It seems to be very plain to my mind that the term "born again" implies a previous birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Nicodemus had already been born once, of the flesh, and in that sense was flesh; but now, in order to see and enter into the kingdom of God, he must be born again—he must be born of the Spirit. This same man, Nicodemus, must be the subject of both these births. I understand Jesus as though he had said, That which is born of the flesh is fleshly in its nature; and that which is born of the Spirit is spiritual in its nature. Or, The first or fleshly birth develops a fleshly nature; while the new, second or

spiritual birth develops a spiritual nature. So I understand that the sinner, "dead in trespasses and in sins," has only the one fleshly nature, developed and brought forth by and in his fleshly birth; while the one who is born again has two natures, fleshly and spiritual, human and divine, inner man and outer man, old man and new man. Every one who has experienced the new or second birth has both these natures of men. The very same man, or "I," that with the mind serves the law of Christ, with the flesh serves the law of sin and death; and right here is the continual warfare and conflict that is experienced by every one in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells. Where is the child of God that does not realize in his or her own experience every day the force and power and antagonism in their own breasts of these two opposing elements—these two bitter enemies and deadly foes? "When I would do good, evil is present with me." "The flesh [or fleshly nature, developed by the first birth] lusteth [or warreth] against the Spirit" (or spiritual nature, developed by the again birth); "and these [two natures] are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." It does seem to me that these things are so plain, and so forcibly experienced by the poor, tempest-tossed children of God, that there is no need of caviling over them. Why, here I am, Henry Redd. I have once been born of the flesh, or of a fleshly, earthly parent, and in that birth I manifested the very nature of my earthly parent. My earthly progenitor was a sinner, and consequently I am also a sinner; and I forcibly realize this every day of my life. I am a poor, miserable, hell-deserving sinner, born of the flesh, and am flesh; but if I am what I sometimes hope the grace and mercy of God have made me, I have also been born again, born of the Spirit, born of an incorruptible seed, born of God, and this spiritual birth has developed within me a spiritual nature, which I did not have before. Ever since I have had an existence in time I have been in possession of a fleshly nature, a sinful nature. I then had no warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, and was then a stranger to the fierce conflict that now rages within. But by and by I hope and feel that there was a great work wrought within me by the mighty God, and that I was born again; not this time of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the

word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and this birth developed a new man, a new Spirit, a new life, a new principle, a new element, a new nature, new desires, new feelings, new affections, and a new creature. From that day to this I have found within me two men, the old man and the new man, the outward man and the inward man, the fleshly man and the spiritual man, the sinful man and the righteous man, the elder man and the younger man, a fleshly nature and a spiritual nature, a human nature and a divine nature, a sinful nature and a holy nature; and these two I find within myself all the while. Ever since this great work was wrought in me I have experienced a continual warfare. These two opposing elements have been in deadly conflict ever since, and often have I thought that surely the old, fleshly, sinful man would prevail at last; but notwithstanding these two distinct births, these two opposing elements, and this continual warfare, I am still Henry Redd, and I have a little hope that I, even Henry Redd, shall one day be delivered from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I myself am continually groaning within myself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of my body. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Do you not suppose that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David, and all the prophets and apostles, had the same conflicts and trials that the saints of to-day experience?

There is another view of this subject that has occurred to my mind since I commenced this letter, and that is this. When Christ said, "Except a man be born again," &c., he might have had reference to himself. He had once been born of the virgin Mary, born of the flesh; but he must be crucified and slain and buried, but he must rise again from the dead, must be born again, born from the dead. Therefore he is said to be the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. Without this birth he could not enter into the kingdom of God. This cup could not pass from him, but he must drink it up. For this purpose he came into the world. "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Je-

rusalem." In his glorious resurrection he "abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." And in this birth being, as it is written of him, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." He was then fully equipped and prepared, with the keys of the kingdom, and with the keys of hell and of death, to enter into the kingdom with all the power and authority of a King that should reign in righteousness. He had once been born of the flesh, and was known after the flesh; but now he is born again "from the dead." Hence Paul says, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (that is, after the flesh). He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, and hence born of the Spirit, and is Spirit. Then he is a spiritual King, and his kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, and his subjects are spiritual subjects. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. He is now the "King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God our Savior." He is "King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting." This new, second or spiritual birth of Jesus from the dead does not destroy the necessity of the same birth to his saints. Indeed, without this birth of the Savior from the dead, "ye" could not enter into the kingdom of God. He must go before, and open the gates of the celestial city. Hence it is written, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah." When Jesus burst the bars of death and came forth, the gates and the everlasting doors were lifted up, and the King of glory entered in and ascended the throne of his glory. He had previously worn the crown of thorns; but now

he is crowned with a kingly crown, and sits upon his mediatorial throne, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. But there is another Scripture which says, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." And again, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Then, dear, sorrowing, sighing ones, you are now wearing the crown of thorns; but you too shall soon wear a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Paul says, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." I am satisfied that the Scriptures teach the eternal vital unity or oneness of Christ and all his members; and the members must follow the head. He is the head, and the church is his body, "the fullness of him that filleth all in all." This church or body fell under the condemnation of the law; but Jesus the head fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle. He magnified it and made it honorable, and met every single claim that the law held against his bride; and when he ascended on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men; and in his ascension was fulfilled the prophecy, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Then when partaking of the sacramental supper with his disciples he said, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Luke records it, "For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And again, "For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." These, with many other Scriptures, seem to strengthen the idea that Jesus was not fully prepared to enter into the kingdom of God till after his resurrection—till after he was born from the dead; and, as before intimated, without this birth from the dead not one of his people should ever have entered into the kingdom of God. So, after all, the entrance of the people of God into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ depends, or did depend, upon the first and second birth of the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. His first birth was that of the virgin Mary, in fulfillment of the prophecy, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." His second birth is that in which Christ is "risen

from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept," and by which he was the "first-born from the dead," and by which he "became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;" "for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." "He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them;" "and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Then, tempest-tossed and afflicted child of God, let me encourage you to rest in the finished work of the dear Redeemer. The gates are opened, the everlasting doors are lifted up, for you and all the blood-bought host, and

"Soon the joyful news will come,  
Child, your Father calls, come home."  
"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

In tribulation and hope,  
H. J. REDD.

#### WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION.

"OUR Father who art in heaven" has been pleased to call the dear children of his infinite love to sojourn on the shores of time, clothed with flesh and mortality, during the short period of their natural lifetime, that the righteous life of his beloved Son Jesus may be made manifest in their mortal bodies, and that they may be to the everlasting praise of his glorious grace, which reigns in their salvation unto eternal glory in and with the glorious Son of God. The glorious purpose of this is, "for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." But this involves great tribulation and exceeding sorrow, suffering and death unto sin in the flesh, both of the only begotten Son of God, and of all the children whom his Father gave him. For they must first die in the flesh, before they can live in the Spirit; they must suffer with their Priest for sin, before they shall reign with their King in righteousness; and they must die in their mortal bodies, as did their elder Brother, first-born from the dead, before this mortal shall put on immortality. This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning the objects of his love, the people of his choice, whom he foreknew in the new covenant of his love, and "did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." Therefore, in the new covenant of the righteous Father, his people whom he foreknew are the brethren of his holy Son Jesus, and the dear children of God, though they are born of the flesh, and are partakers of flesh and blood. Their holy Redeemer said, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,

he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. ii. 13-15. This inspired testimony is very clear and plain, showing that "the word was made flesh," and thus "the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," and that, as "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood," "he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."—Heb. ii. 17. In this verse it is said, "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren," the children whom God gave him, who are partakers of flesh and blood, the people for whose sins he made reconciliation, whom he shall save from their sins and deliver from death. Of him Paul says, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father."—Gal. i. 4. Divine brotherhood and heavenly relationship are thus clearly shown between our holy Redeemer and his redeemed people, who are quickened together with him, and raised up together, that our God and Father "might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."—Rom. ix. 23, 24. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many."—xii. 13, 14. Paul here speaks of the body of Christ, as the individual members, and as brethren in the Spirit and life of Christ. For it is in the Spirit of life and holiness only, and in the divine Sonship of Jesus Christ the righteous, that the called of God, both Jews and Gentiles, are the children of our Father in heaven. For it is written of Jesus, "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."—Verse 16. "For through him we both [Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit unto the Father."—Eph. ii. 18. "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."—Col. ii. 13. As thus quickened with Christ, forgiven all trespasses and sins, and sealed with his Spirit in their hearts, the people whom God foreknew are called his sons, though they are the sons and daughters of men, "and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Speaking of this calling of the Gentiles into the blessedness of the gospel of Christ, the Scripture said,

"And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; shall they be called the children of the living God."—Rom. ix. 26. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Rom. viii. 14. Into this holy and blessed relationship the quickened people of God are called, as the children whom he gave his Son and heir; and unto this heavenly estate of salvation and eternal glory in Christ they are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise in their hearts, as heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and they are now "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Truly, this is a gracious and glorious work, which the Lord hath wrought for his people, and begun in them. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called THE SONS OF GOD!"—1 John iii. 1. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."—Gal. iv. 6, 7. Let us now notice that old relation and state of servants, out of which the people of the blessed God are called, into the new and better relation and estate of sons. For we call attention to the interesting fact that the same people who were servants are now sons. The same chosen people of Israel who were oppressed bondmen in Egypt, were made the Lord's freemen in Canaan. How great the change! and how vast the contrast! Yet more wonderful and blessed still is the gracious change which the Lord has made in the state of his new covenant people, in delivering them from the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of his dear Son, and making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. For though they were some time darkness, yet now are they light in the Lord. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." The Son of God was both manifested in the flesh, and "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Gal. iv. 4, 5. For the chosen people of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ were both blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to the Father himself, to the praise of the glory of his grace. And they were chosen and blessed of God, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.—Eph. i. 3-6. Therefore the old state and relation they were in, from which the Lord redeems and brings them, was that of the servants of sin in the flesh and under the law. Paul has shown this in Rom. vi. and Gal. iii. "At that time ye were without Christ, being

aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."—Eph. ii. 12. This was verily a woeful condition, and a state of helpless ruin, as we, brethren, have been made to mournfully realize in our personal experience and knowledge, as having passed from death unto life. O how earnestly, and with strong crying and tears, we prayed to God for mercy! and he heard our cry. "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."—Eph. ii. 13. "For through him we both" (Jews and Gentiles) "have access by one Spirit unto the Father."—Eph. ii. 18. This is a new, living, filial, loving and holy relationship into which the predestinated people of the living God are brought; insomuch that he has quickened them, revealed his Son in them, given them to believe on Christ, and made them his sons and daughters in the life and sonship and righteousness of his own beloved Son. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, HE IS A NEW CREATURE: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17. This leads to a consideration of the Spirit of adoption, by which the dear children of God cry, Abba, Father. "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."—Rom. viii. 15. "In whom [Christ] also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14. That holy Spirit is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and therefore it is a quickening Spirit; for Jesus said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth."—John vi. 63. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ."—Eph. ii. 4, 5. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."—John v. 21. Who are they that are quickened, but the people of God, men and women, who were dead in sins? Does not Jesus say, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life?"—John v. 24. "We know that we have passed from death unto life," says John, when writing to sinful men like himself. Of his people Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish."—John x. 28. It is a glorious gospel truth, then, that the dead are made alive, and the lost are found or saved; that the children of men, who were under the law and its curse, have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins; and that sinners of the guilty race of

Adam are quickened by the Spirit of adoption, and pass from death unto life, from bondage to liberty, and are no more servants, but sons and heirs of God through Christ. This marvelous and gracious change is wrought in them by the Spirit of adoption, and it is the same as being born again, "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 13. It is a faithful and true saying, therefore, "That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." For he says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Have we felt that we were guilty, condemned and lost sinners? and realized a godly sorrow for sin, which "worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of?" Then are we the called of God, the children of his love, and "have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."—Rom. viii. 15, 16. Yet all this, though so wonderful and great a blessing, is not enough; for though our God, who is rich in mercy, predestinated his chosen people unto the adoption of children, and has quickened us together with Christ, and sent forth the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, whereby we call him "Our Father, who art in heaven," and we now adore and love him; still there is something more that we wait and hope for; for we are not yet perfect, neither are we satisfied. We desire to obtain a better resurrection, "a better country, that is, a heavenly." As Simeon waited to see Jesus, the Lord's Christ or Anointed, so do we wait for the manifestation of the sons of God, and for the glorious and full revelation in the last time of that everlasting salvation with which we shall be saved in the Lord, our Redeemer and righteousness, resurrection and life. "Ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY."—Rom. viii. 23. It was by inspiration and revelation of the Spirit of truth that Paul thus wrote to the brethren in Christ, who, with himself, groaned in their mortal bodies, because of their fleshly corruptions and subjection to vanity; encouraging them with the divine assurance that, "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Verse 21. This deliverance or salvation of the creature will be consummated in the redemption of our body from corruption, mortality or death, in the resurrection unto life. This is the adoption, for which we wait. Paul comprehends this blessing of adoption in few words—the redemption of our body. Our body is now corruptible and mortal, earthly and vile, sinful and dying; therefore we are made to cry out, with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall

deliver me from the body of this death?"—Rom. vii. 24. With mingled sorrow and joy we realize the truth of his words, saying to us, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."—Rom. viii. 10, 11. When this shall have been done, dear brethren, then shall our bodies be both spiritual and immortal, and like the risen body of our precious Redeemer; for our bodies shall be quickened by the same Spirit, power and glory of the Father that raised up Jesus his Son from the dead, and we shall then bear his image, be like him, and behold his glory. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."—1 Cor. xv. 54. "The body is dead because of sin," says Paul; but when this corruptible and mortal body of the dear child of God shall be quickened by the Spirit of adoption, and raised in incorruption and immortality, then shall the sting of death and the victory of the grave be swallowed up or destroyed, and all the redeemed shall shout, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our groaning and waiting shall then have ended in adoption or redemption, the sons of God shall be manifested, and we shall be the children of God, "being the children of the resurrection." The blessed Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, the first begotten of the dead, and the first fruits of all who sleep in him, taught, saying, "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."—Luke xx. 35, 36. All this wonderful revelation of God's eternal truth shows us, beloved brethren, that, as predestinated unto the adoption of children to God the Father, and as sinners saved by grace from sin and death, "the redemption of our body," in "the resurrection from the dead," is absolutely necessary to the glorious manifestation of the sons of God, in the divine image of his immortal Son Jesus, whom he raised up from the dead to the throne of eternal glory, and made him his first-born among many brethren. All his foreknown people, whom he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, when they shall be also raised up in the likeness of his resurrection, will make up the "many brethren." "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation

perfect through sufferings."—Heb. ii. 10. But as he suffered for their sins in the flesh, and died unto sin for their redemption, that he might bring them to God, so must they also suffer with him, even unto death. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Of himself he said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke xxiv. 26. This was after he had suffered unto death, and arose unto glory, to die no more. While in the flesh as our suffering Redeemer he cried unto God, as we now do, and said, "Abba, Father."—Mark xiv. 36. He was then known as the Son of man; for he was not yet glorified. But when "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," he was then "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."—Rom. i. 4. So likewise are we the children of men in the flesh, and must suffer together with him, and follow him down to the silent chamber of death, before we shall receive the adoption, and be manifested as the sons of God. Then, as children and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, we shall be glorified together with him. Of this eternal glory Paul said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—Rom. viii. 18. John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2. "And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," said Paul to men of Corinth. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. And when all that countless multitude of people redeemed from the earth shall appear in glory, in the presence of God, Jesus will then be glorified in them, and he will say of them, as his glorified brethren, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me!" "And God himself shall be with them. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Dear brethren in the Spirit of adoption, the voice of the good Shepherd says to us, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Yet we now "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." "In hope of eternal life," and thus groaning, being burdened, sorrowing and waiting for the coming of the Lord in glory, I am your brother in tribulation and patience.

DAVID BARTLEY.  
NEW CASTLE, Ind., April 14, 1888.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Feb. 18, 1886.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I think this letter of our dear brother, the late Elder Theobald, ought to be published. I submit it to your judgment. It was written a good while ago; and whatever may have been the reasons for his not wishing it published then, I do not think it ought to be withheld from the brethren now. He was a lovely man, a dear brother, a sweet and powerful preacher of the gospel, a very meek and self-depreciating christian. As I read over this letter I feel his loss very deeply.

Your brother in hope,  
SILAS H. DURAND.

NEAR OWENTON, Ky., March 6, 1868.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Much has been said of late upon the subject of regeneration. Only in one point of view can I regard the unity of Christ and the chosen as being eternal, and that is in spirit. Predestination connects all the children with rational souls and bodies; and the end of this purpose is the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. These rational souls and bodies in their original generation are only adapted to an earthly abode; but having been predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, and to the enjoyment of a spiritual habitation, they must be regenerated. Scriptural phrases, I think, should be defined as near as possible by Scripture. In Scripture, if we trace the word "generation" back to its origin, we will find that it expressed creation.—Genesis ii. 4. In the scriptural use of the words, I can see no difference in the meaning of "begotten again" and "born again," "begotten of God" and "born of God."—See Genesis for the use made and the significance of the word "begat;" and Galatians iv. 29 for the meaning of "born." John i. and Ephesians v. seem to use the words, "born of God," "begotten of him," and "begat," synonymously. We should never lose sight of the pre-eminence of our Lord Jesus in all things; and in this very thing of regeneration he represents his people in some sense as following him. "Ye which have followed me," &c., "when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." We see united in the person of our Lord, God and man; and thus he communes with heaven and earth. He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham; for it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, &c. Having taken upon him this seed, "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all

of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Our sins at last sunk the man to the grave; but "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; for when I fall I shall rise again." For "he will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."—Micah vii. 19, 20. Jesus said to his disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come." Had not Jesus taken upon him the form of a servant, rendering obedience unto death, there would have been no such thing as comfort for those who had sinned; but although he was put to death in the flesh, he was quickened by the Spirit, and by his death he infallibly secured two things. First, the putting away of our sins by the sacrifice of himself; and second, the resurrection of every heir of glory. From this standpoint I think we may see tolerably clear the import of the apostle's words, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ." And the answer to Peter, "Ye which have followed me in the regeneration," &c. To follow is to travel the same road, having the same place of destination in view, after another. I must conclude then that the word "regeneration," as used in the Scriptures, refers to the salvation of the Adamic man, and comprises the whole of the means by which and through which he is saved. When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of God, henceforth expecting his enemies to be made his footstool; for he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Jesus has passed through the portals of death; death hath no more dominion over him. But it is far different with the saints living upon earth. They are still made to cry out, with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" At whatever time the poor prisoner of hope may be actually released from the bondage of corruption, he will most joyfully and transportingly give glory to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto our God.

What was the result of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of God's dear Son? Was it not the complete glorification of his humanity? Is not this the most complete exhibition of the way of life and salvation ever revealed to the faith of God's elect? We are told that "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell

in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Being born again, of incorruptible seed, develops in the heirs of glory the Spirit of him that raised up our Lord from the dead; and regeneration, to my mind, seems to comprehend what is to result to the Adamic man from this development. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." "According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." But, says one, the work of regeneration, whatever it is, is past already, accomplished, and by it we are already saved. In the mind of that God who inhabiteth eternity, and who calleth those things that be not as though they were, it is done; for he is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. All the love and kindness toward man (Titus iii. 4), the purpose and grace (2 Tim. i. 9), were given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but when Jesus actually came forward and abolished death (as in his own humanity—"I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of hell and of death"), a more clear comprehension of the profound mysteries of the way of salvation through the sacrifice of Christ was enjoyed through the Spirit. He brought life and immortality to light. Here was in his own person a glorious example of the exceeding greatness of his power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, far above all principalities and powers, angels being made subject unto him.—Ephesians i. 21; 1 Peter iii. 22. But Christ is "the first fruits of them that slept." He is "the forerunner," gone into heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us; but we know that we are following him, for now through the Spirit we are called to be partakers of his sufferings. He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. What must have been the agony of our precious Redeemer when all the reproaches of our sins fell on him? Hear him cry out, "Reproach hath broken my heart." When through the Spirit his ransomed ones are led to see the previously hidden evils of their own hearts, then they begin to feel some little of the agonies of Jesus. Now do their souls feel sorrowful indeed, although it was said, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." These same little ones, in their fellowship of his sufferings, are also made conformable to his death, and shall know in their own individual persons the power of his resurrection. "I was alive with-

out the law once," said Paul; "but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Not until spiritual life was communicated could Paul attain to a true knowledge of sin. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." "For sin is the transgression of the law." "But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The law is the ministration of death, and nothing but death and condemnation can the sinner expect from it. But if the ministration of death was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory which was to be done away, much more that which remaineth is glorious; for that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excelleth. In Christ, not in Moses, have we righteousness and strength; for it yet remains a fact that "the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." In reference to the saints, Paul tells us that "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Then I think is the time when we shall have completely followed Jesus in the regeneration. When we shall have through him overcome the last enemy, as he himself overcame, and sat down with his Father on his throne, each saint thus overcoming will sit down with him on his throne. You may think that I put the effect for the cause, in making regeneration the effect of being born again; but let me ask a question. Was not the exceeding greatness of that mighty power displayed in imparting life and immortality to him that was dead? And if so, was not that immortality hid with Christ in God? If we have the Son of God we have life; and it is called Christ in you the hope of glory. If we were dead with Christ otherwise than legally or representatively, we might have been raised up with him otherwise; but if not, then we must suppose that as subjects of law we were, when he died for us, regarded dead; for Paul tells us that "if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves," &c. What does Paul mean by "that they which live?" Not certainly that through the resurrection of the man Christ, the men and women for whom he died should be made immortal before he who is their life shall appear. No; they must be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit. Hence he says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the

life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." Being born of God, the body of death is discovered, and the wretchedness of the man is felt and deplored; but a faith's view of the glorious, risen Lord opens wide the door of hope, and we believe in God, who raised Jesus from the dead. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

I do not know, brother Durand, whether you will be able to gather my ideas at last; but as I saw in a late number of the SIGNS that you wished to see the views of other brethren upon this subject, I thought I would try to show my opinion. I did not send this to the SIGNS, for reasons which I have no doubt will be obvious to you. I do not feel capable of writing for the public, and I cannot help fearing that I have darkened counsel by words without knowledge; but I have confidence that you will bear with me, and that you will not expose my infirmities. The suggestions contained in this imperfect letter have been hastily written, and I have not the patience to rewrite, and I do not know that I could make the thing any better if I should. I hope that meekness may still characterize the instructions of our dear brethren who write for the SIGNS. Their communications have been exceedingly interesting to me for some time past, and many in this country are expressing their relish for its contents, who heretofore have been indifferent upon the subject. May God bless you, my dear brother, and keep you from the evils of this present world, and preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom.

I remain your sincere friend and (I hope) brother in the Lord,  
J. M. THEOBALD.

MILLERS, Oregon, March 15, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I send you a money-order for two dollars, to pay for one year's subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for Elder Silas Williams. Also, with this I inclose a brief sketch of his christian experience, which I wish you would publish in the SIGNS. He wrote it out and handed it to me nearly a month ago. Elder Williams is a bold and able defender of the truth, and I believe the Lord has called him out from among the Mission Baptists for a purpose of his own glory. I hope he will be spared for a long time to fill his place as the pastor of our little church, and to preach to the churches of the Siloam Association. I think his usefulness to the Old School Baptists has just begun, and I think that many of our brethren and friends would like to read the account he has written of the Lord's dealings with him.

Yours in christian love,

E. T. T. FISHER.

ALBANY, Oregon, Feb. 20, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have for a long time felt impressed to write to the household of faith through the columns of your valuable paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, in relation to the Lord's dealings with me, as I trust, a poor sinner; but in view of my inability to write anything for the comfort of God's children, I have failed to do so until now.

I was born in Jackson County, Missouri, in 1834. Soon afterward my father moved to Cedar County, in the southwestern part of the state, and died when I was six years old. I learned from my mother that he was a Primitive Baptist in belief, but never united with the church. My mother was a member before the split, but soon afterward went with the Mission Baptists. At an early age I was sent to Sabbath School. The teacher tried to teach me religion, but failed in his efforts, as I was dead in trespasses and sins; but as well as I can remember, when I was about sixteen years old, while at home, under no religious influence, and ignorant of the true teaching of the Bible, I trust the Lord revealed to me that I was a lost sinner. No pen can describe the awful feeling that came over me. My just condemnation was so clearly revealed to me that I thought it was no use to pray; yet the secret breathing of my heart was, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." This feeling continued with me for a few hours, and then left me for a time. I then began to form resolutions to do better in the future, believing that my good works would secure God's favor. In this I failed, and thought it was no use for me to try to seek his favor any more, and gave myself up as lost. Some months after this the Cumberland Presbyterians commenced a meeting in my neighborhood. I did not attend for some time after the meeting commenced. Learning that there was a revival of religion there, I went to see what they were doing, when a deep sense of my guilt and condemnation was again revealed to me. The preacher arose and read his text, and commenced preaching. It appeared to me that I could hear nothing but his voice, as I was so deeply concerned about my condition. At the close of his discourse he gave an invitation for anxious ones to come forward for prayers; and the first I knew I was on my knees, praying for mercy. There and then, I trust, the Lord revealed himself to me as the one altogether lovely. It appeared to me at that time that there was a stream of love flowing into my poor soul which no pen can describe. I thought surely my troubles were all gone forever; but in this I soon found that I was mistaken. Soon after this I united with this so-called church, and was chosen and ordained a ruling elder, which office I held until I received a letter to come to Oregon, in the spring of 1852. I then started the long and

toilsome journey across the plains to Oregon, and when I arrived here I found this country comparatively a wilderness. I was here a long time before I heard preaching of any kind. Finally I heard of a meeting in the neighborhood, conducted by Mission Baptists, and after attending their meetings for some time I united with them. Being an earnest worker among them, they thought they saw in me a gift; so they licensed me to preach, and soon afterward ordained me to the full work of the ministry. I then went to work with all the energy of my soul, trying, as I then thought, to win souls to Christ, which I believed I could do. In this work I labored earnestly for eighteen years, often holding protracted meetings for weeks at a time; and verily I thought I was doing God's service, until I trust that he revealed to me the whole truth. This was in the spring of 1880. At that time there was but one Primitive Baptist living in my neighborhood, Deacon William Clymer, who in the fall of 1879 gave me a large number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I commenced reading them; and I found the argument in favor of the doctrine of predestination, election, special atonement and effectual calling so clear and conclusive, that I began to fear I was wrong in the doctrine I had been advocating. This caused me to examine the Scriptures to see if this doctrine was true; and when I began to read in the Bible this doctrine, the glorious light began to shine, as I trust, from the Sun of righteousness. At that time I was preaching for a large Mission Baptist Church in my neighborhood, which I had been laboring for years to build up. The time for my meeting was near at hand, and I did not know what to do, as my mind was now changed from my former views to the doctrine held by the Primitive Baptists. When the morning arrived that I was to preach I was much troubled. While in the barn feeding my horse there were thoughts so forcibly impressed in my mind that I spoke out in an audible voice, Preach the doctrine of predestination and election, for it is the doctrine of the Bible. So I went to the church, and that day there was a large congregation. My text was, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." If ever the Lord was with me, it was at that time. I felt like I was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit. I think this was the first gospel sermon that I ever preached. This caused dissatisfaction with some of the members, who labored to convince me that I was unsound in doctrine. I had now lost all fellowship for this so-called church and all its institutions. O how anxious I was to see an Old Baptist. My mind then turned to Elder Stipp, knowing that he was an able minister of the gospel, and I greatly desired to hear him preach. He was then, and is yet, pastor of the Scio

Church. So I went to their meeting with an anxious desire to hear the glorious doctrine of grace preached; and when I heard the old Elder proclaim it in its purity, O how it cheered my poor heart. I thought he was the most lovely man I had ever met. Soon after this I went to the Siloam Association; and when I arrived there and saw the brethren and sisters meeting, I thought I never before saw such love and fellowship manifested in all my life. My poor heart was so filled with love and fellowship for them that I could not hold my peace, and I had to tell them what the Lord had done for me. I had no thought that they would invite me to preach, as I was yet a member of the Mission Baptists; but they did, and I think the Lord assisted me to preach the truth, as they all seemed to indorse the doctrine I preached. This gave me encouragement, and was a great relief to my mind. Soon after this I went to Bethel Church, of which Elder Stipp was then pastor, and tried in my weak way to relate to the church what the Lord had done for me. I was received, and baptized by Elder Stipp on the 19th day of July, 1880. This ordinance I was anxious to receive, and have it administered by one who was authorized by the church of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Soon after this the church called a council, and I was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, and was chosen pastor of the church. Since that time I have been trying to feed the church of Christ, which he has purchased with his own blood.

Brethren Beebe, I feel that I have written more than you will have patience to read; but I desire to say to you before I close that if there is anything in all this world that I love, it is the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord assist you in the future, as in the past, to wield your pen in the defense of the truth; for the weapons of your warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. I submit this to your disposal. Do with it as you think best, and all will be right with me.

I am, as I trust, your brother in tribulation,

SILAS WILLIAMS.

OZARK, Ala., April 20, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Through the superabounding grace of our God we are the highly favored of the Lord, and are kept under his guardian care and preserved by his grace, and are often made to wonder why God should thus smile upon such poor, wretched mortals as we; for we behold nothing within ourselves but sin and pollution, and are often made to say, "Bow down thine ear and hear us, for we are poor and needy." How often we find ourselves murmuring and complaining at God's dealings with us in leading us in darkness, when the apostle tells us that "All

things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." But ah! do I love the Lord? Have I been redeemed, and received a sweet token of God's love and mercy to poor me? Sometimes we almost despair, and are almost ready to give up, and think we have been deceived all the while; but when Jesus bids us arise and shine, for our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon us, we open the book of inspiration, and everything seems new and lovely, and for a moment seems to be sending forth a sweet anthem of praise to the Lord of lords and King of kings, and we can say, "Resign us, O Lord, to thy will." How often are we learning by experience that we are yet the very "chief of sinners." May God in his infinite mercy keep us humble, and enable us to behold our own faults, and not those of another.

How prone we are to forget God's gracious dealings with us, and begin to complain; but our worst complaint is when we complain so much with our brethren. O that we could see more love existing in Zion, and that we could ever be at the feet of Jesus. When the nations of the earth cease to fight against Zion, she begins to fight against herself. I am so glad to see those precious communications from Elder Durand in the SIGNS. I think they will have a tendency to unite the dear children of God on that point. I do want to see all sound Baptists united. We ought not to want every one to use strictly our expressions in preaching, for we should remember that we are poor, fallible creatures, and liable to use wrong words to convey our ideas; but I think the safer plan is to use the expressions used in the Bible as much as we can, and then we will get along better. I feel, from the appearance of things, that God's people are getting nearer together, and the prospect for the future seems brighter than in the past. I am now in Indiana, and have met many of the dear saints, and it seems that I can behold the image of Jesus in their countenances, and that they are being bound nearer and nearer together in love. I do prize this glorious manifestation of God's goodness to me, in enabling me to meet so many of the precious saints, and to converse with them about Jesus. If the Lord will, I shall visit the brethren in Ohio and Kentucky before I return south. May the Lord abundantly bless you, brethren Beebe, and all the household of faith. Love to all the saints.

From a little one, I hope.

LEE HANCKS.

#### JUST RECEIVED.

WE have received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Elders and messengers of the churches composing the Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the church at Southampton, Pa., May 30th, 31st and June 1st, 1888, to the churches whose messengers we are, send christian salutation.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—In this epistle of love, which according to our custom we send you, we will call your especial attention to the subject of election, a most important and precious branch of the doctrine of God our Savior. In the consideration of this subject we will begin where our knowledge of it began. When the Lord would make known to Joseph's brethren his merciful purpose concerning them, he began by calling for a famine upon the land, and breaking the whole staff of bread.—Psalm cv. 16. In the same way he begins with his elect people when he would make known unto them their election of God, and their heirship to all the blessings of the everlasting covenant through Christ, in whom they were chosen before the foundation of the world. He makes waste the mountains and hills of human power and merit, and dries up the herbs upon which they fed. He makes the rivers of salvation which they thought flowed from these exalted works of men to be as islands, and dries up all the pools of human wisdom and goodness which had before satisfied their thirst; and when in this way he has caused all their strength and all their hopes to fail, so that no way of salvation appears to their despairing view, he brings them, as blind, by a way that they knew not.—Isaiah xlii. 15. We are taught first that salvation is "not by works of righteousness which we have done." This is to us the end of all hope in ourselves, for the wisdom of men can see no other way in which man can be just with God. Those who are thus brought to the end of the earth do in the Lord's own time and way receive a gracious revelation of the salvation of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; a salvation which is "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began;" a salvation which is unto all the ends of the earth, unto every poor sinner who has reached the end of all earthly wisdom and righteousness and strength; and a salvation which all the ends of the earth shall most certainly see.—Isa. lii. 10. This revelation of Jesus as our salvation and our righteousness is always a surprise. It is always by a way that he knew not that the sinner is brought to God, and made to rejoice in hope of his glory. It can never cease to be a cause for wonder that the Lord should set his love upon us, and extend mercy and salvation to such vile, polluted creatures; but when we learn that his love and mercy are from everlasting, as well as to ever-

lasting, without beginning, as well as without end, our wonder and admiration are beyond expression.

It is not by the teaching of men, even of the Lord's servants, but by the teaching of the Holy Spirit in their own experience, that the chosen people of God are led into an understanding of the doctrine which is according to godliness. That doctrine is not given to them for the gratification of a natural thirst for knowledge, but as the bread of life, which they have been made to hunger for. Every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God is that by which his people live. They do not know this at first, when the amazing grace and love of God fill their souls with heavenly joy and comfort, and they cannot think that they will ever have anything more to do with sin and trouble; but when they are drawn away from the breasts of Zion's consolations, and weaned from the milk which flowed so freely to them as babes in Christ, then in the darkness and desolation which follow they are taught knowledge, and made to understand doctrine.—Isa. xxviii. 9. And how different to the hungry souls of God's dear people is the doctrine spoken to them by one who has learned it in this way from that which has been received from men; for those who have received what they teach from men, even though it be from the most spiritual of God's servants, will always miss the very thing that is essential to the comfort of the Lord's people, the secret of the Lord, which cannot be received of men, and so will be as dry breasts to those who desire the sincere milk of the word. When we are enabled to speak to the saints that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, not with the eyes of another, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, then the secret comfort of the word flows out to them, and their fellowship is with us. And sometimes we can say that we know their election of God, because the gospel we preach comes not unto them in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.—1 Thess. i. 4, 5.

When the light of God's countenance as we felt it in the first joy of our hope is withdrawn from us, and instead of the sweetness and comfort of his loving presence we are left to feel only the vileness of our own hearts, then we begin to look with great anxiety and care for the ground of our hope, and for the evidences that the love of God has ever been fixed upon us. As he is revealed to us as infinitely holy, of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look upon iniquity, we can see no reason in ourselves for regarding his love as ours, but every reason to conclude that it is not, and cannot be. It is in such a condition and need on our part that the precious truth is revealed to us, that truth which makes us free. The truth is in Jesus, and Jesus is the truth; and

when we know one we know the other. The truth of election is now made known unto us in its beauty and power. We had thought that God could not have loved or chosen any but holy beings; and when we failed to find any good thing in us, we failed to see how he could have loved or chosen us. So the doctrine of salvation by the works of the creature was death to us. We were equally unable to find any ground of hope for ourselves in the doctrine of some that election, the choice of God, embraced, not sinners, not the natural man, but eternal spiritual children, who were eternally holy, and still holy when manifested by a birth in this world. We could not see in this anything to indicate that the love of God could ever be fixed upon us.

But the Lord in his own way made us cease from man, and caused us to receive the word from his mouth. "My sheep hear my voice," said the dear Redeemer; and blessed be his name, he caused us to hear it. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Mark ii. 17. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke xix. 10. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."—John xv. 16. Here is a doctrine that reaches us, poor sinners, for such indeed we feel ourselves to be, and truly we were lost, and if he had not chosen us, we never should have chosen him. We chose worldly things until he called us. There was no love to him in our hearts, and no capacity for that love. How then could we know and feel that love? The doctrine of the dear Savior also shows salvation even here. For, "Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us." Yes, he wrought in us by his holy Spirit a capacity for that love, and then revealed it unto us, and shed it abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Therefore "we love him because he first loved us."—John iv. 10, 19; Romans v. 5. Yes, even when we were dead in sins he loved us.—Eph. ii. 4, 5. He also assures us that he has loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness he has drawn us.—Jer. xxxi. 3. The one who was loved with an everlasting love is the very one who is drawn, the poor sinner whom God hath from the beginning chosen unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he is called by the gospel.—2 Thess. ii. 13. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," not because we were holy, but "that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Eph. i. 4. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 2. How precious this doctrine of election appears to us now as it is taught in the inspired Scriptures, and shown

to us by the Spirit of truth. The doctrines of men removed hope and comfort far from us; but the word of truth presents a doctrine just suited to our need, and consistent with the infinitely exalted character of our God.

We learn by this inspired teaching that God's election was before the world began, eternal, like himself; that it embraced sinners of Adam's fallen race, who were yet to be manifested in time, and is therefore said to be "according to the foreknowledge of God;" that this election or choice was not because of holiness in the objects of it, but that they should be holy; that it was not because of good works foreseen in them, but "unto obedience," and "unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." We learn also that the choice of these vessels of mercy was in Christ before the world began, and that in him and by him they were afore prepared unto glory. He is the ark in whom is their salvation, because they are in him. He therefore as the Mediator, and in the work of redemption, is called the Lord's servant, whom he upholds, his elect, in whom his soul delighteth. By the Spirit of the Lord which was put upon him when he came in the flesh of his people he brought forth judgment to the Gentiles.—Isa. xlii. 1. He executed justice and judgment for his elect people, and made them all righteous. That righteousness he works in them. They were chosen unto this end, "unto salvation," "unto obedience," "unto the sprinkling of the blood of Christ," unto glory and virtue. In Jesus they have eternal life. This life was theirs in him before the world began, but is now manifested in them, and they are thus manifested as heirs of it. He is and eternally was their life. In him, by virtue of this life, and in this spiritual relationship, they were accounted holy before the world began. They are regarded as sheep before the fall: "All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. liii. 6. The church is regarded as his wife before she fell. Because of this eternal relationship or unity of life he could be their Redeemer. Because of their being in him before they fell in Adam, in which relationship or unity of eternal life they were and are ever regarded as holy, he could follow them in the transgression, as Adam, in the figure of him that was to come, followed his bride in the transgression, they being one before she was separately manifested, and before she fell. And as they were eternally one with him in spiritual life, so he becomes one with them in the flesh, being "made of a woman, made under the law," and thus prepared to redeem them from under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. One cannot be adopted while held in legal captivity; but when delivered from this legal bondage under the law we receive this adoption of sons, that is,

are manifested as heirs of that eternal life, that relationship of sons to God in the Sonship of Christ, which is the inheritance that this figure of adoption brings to view. And from the time that we received this Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father, until the adoption itself is fully realized, to wit, the redemption of our body, it is our blessed privilege to say, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."—Titus i. 2.

The elect are spoken of as the substance of Christ, which was not hid from God when made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth; and it is further declared, "Thine eyes did see my substance [embryo], yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."—Psalm cxxxix. 15, 16. This evidently refers to those who were foreknown, and predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God.—Romans viii. 29. God inhabits eternity, and to him there is neither past nor future, in the sense that there is with us; for time is his creature as well as man, and he " calleth things that be not as though they were."—Rom. iv. 17. So also the delights of wisdom are said to have been with the sons of men before the earth was made.—Prov. viii. 23-31.

The sheep which were the gift of the Father to Christ, which were the objects of his everlasting love, are the same for whom he laid down his life, whom he calls by name, who follow him, and unto whom he gives eternal life.—John x. Power over all flesh was given to the Son, in order that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. They were given him out of the world. They are chosen out of the world, and therefore are not of the world. They are not of the world, even as Jesus is not of the world. They are to be made perfect in one. "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." And they have been loved of the Father as the Son was loved of him, "before the foundation of the world."—John xv. 19; xvii. 2, 6, 16, 21-24. Those who were foreknown and predestinated are called, justified and glorified; and these are called the elect, for whom Christ died.—Romans viii. 29-34.

Thus we see that the elect of God, whether regarded in their spiritual relation as eternally holy in the Son of God, or in their Adamic relation as involved in the fall, and as the subjects of redemption, are still the same. Their identity is preserved.

Those who were chosen in Christ before the world began, are in due time manifested through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. They are called out of the darkness of nature into God's marvelous light.—1 Peter ii. 9. Because they are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts,

crying, Abba, Father.—Gal. iv. 6. Having been first manifested by a fleshly birth in their Adamic relation, they are now manifested by a spiritual birth as sons of God, being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.—1 Peter i. 21. Until this divine life is thus manifested within them they cannot see the kingdom of God, and know nothing of his reigning power. They cannot by any possibility be made to know, even, that they are sinners. As the dear Savior said to a master in Israel, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Whether that man was ever manifested by a birth from above as a child of God or not, it is clearly evident from the Savior's language to him that, like all natural men, he was at that time without the capacity to discern spiritual things.

As soon as life is experienced its effect is seen, as clearly as the effect of the wind is discovered, which bloweth where it listeth. At once the poor soul begins to mourn on account of sin, which he never did before. Holy desires and heavenly longings are felt, which cannot be satisfied until Jesus is revealed to our faith as our righteousness and salvation. This is that life which was in the Word in the beginning, and which was the light of men. This light shines in the darkness of our nature, but the darkness comprehends it not.—John i. 1-5. Our natural powers are just as incompetent to understand spiritual things as before the spiritual birth. The manifestation of eternal life in the vessel of mercy by this birth from above has produced a great change in this poor sinner, as light causes a great change in a dark room or filthy dungeon, or as a natural birth produces a great change in condition and circumstances; but it hardly need be remarked that the change thus produced is by no means a change of nature, for a birth never changes the nature of anything. The product of the first birth remains the same after as before the new birth; but also the product of the second birth, the divine life, is the same in the poor sinner who has received it as it was before it was thus manifested, infinitely pure and holy. So while the sinner who has been born from above remains a poor sinner still, there is this great difference in his present condition from the former: now he knows it, and before he did not. He, the sinner, has not only this natural, sinful life of Adam, but he has also the sinless, holy, eternal life of God, by the light of which he sees his sins, sees his own death state, sees and feels that in Adam he dies, that the body is dead because of sin, and mourns on account of it.

But springing from this new life, as from a living fountain, are new desires, new motives, a precious hope, love to God, with everything that is pure and holy. Therefore he who has this life will ever feel within him a desire after the things of God; but

his flesh will still desire the things of the world. Therefore "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. This flesh includes all that is born of the flesh, all the powers and ambitions that are highly regarded in the world, as well as those of a baser character. This flesh, with all its powers, desires and propensities, is called the old man, as being first in manifestation; and we are exhorted by the apostle to put it off, and not be directed by it. That which is born of the Spirit is called the new man, as being second in manifestation; and we are exhorted to put it on, to follow the leadings of the Spirit. A Christian is not at liberty to take counsel of even the highest wisdom or noblest desires or purest affections of his natural mind or heart, when they conflict with the direction of the Spirit, for they are all vanity, as "every man in his best state is altogether vanity." He is to take counsel only of the Spirit of Christ. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." In the experience of these two opposing natures there is an experience of a grievous warfare. It is an affliction to the child of God, a sore affliction, to find that sin still lives in him, though he cannot live in sin, and to feel its terrible power, which he hates; but it is a blessed truth that when we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; and it is sweet to know that as Jesus overcame, so we shall overcome by him. "That which is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith." From time to time, while in this waiting, pilgrimage state, we are permitted sweetly to experience this victory of faith, when the dear Savior is pleased to manifest himself graciously and blessedly to us; and we rejoice in the precious assurance that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory.

SILAS H. DURAND, Mod.

CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

*The Delaware Baptist Association, to the several churches composing the same, sends greeting.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—In undertaking to send a message to you from this general gathering together of brethren with their sanction and concurrence, we might be expected to send an epistle that would call up to your attention weighty matters that might otherwise escape observation, and thereby show an interest in your spiritual welfare. We may hope, perhaps, that there will be no serious disappointment in your expectations.

We as professed worshipers acknowledge God as the object, and only object, of worship. To him reverence and adoration belong. He hath declared himself to be a Spirit. He is not therefore confined to localities. Neither is he worshiped by

going to certain places, or going through certain forms, or observing times and seasons of the year. Men may be deceived and imposed upon by solemn forms and outward services, and the grossest hypocrisy may pass among our fellow-creatures for real piety; but with him who looks through all outward forms and actions to the motive and prompting of the actor, there can be no deception. He cannot be mocked. It is quite generally believed that men are advancing, and that in the day in which we live people are naturally enlightened, and in knowledge and understanding are ahead of any former age. If this were so, we might look for discernment and discrimination, and that everything that would not stand the test of heart-searching investigation would be set at naught. Leave all superstition, hypocrisy and vain show to the days of heathen darkness; and let all religious forms and services that are merely put on for effect, and designed to deceive and impose upon men, exposed to the light that is supposed to shine in this our day, be consigned to that public scorn and contempt that they justly deserve. If men had really been enlightened to know anything of that God who is an infinitely holy and pure Spirit, they would have known that he could not be mocked, and also something of what it is to love him and seek him, and of that worship which alone is acceptable to him. It must be apparent to the most indifferent observer that these evidences of general illumination do not exist. All manner of artificial excitements and vain and empty forms continue to charm and attract the multitude. Men are as readily deceived and imposed upon by empty profession and an outward show of piety and humility as they ever were. We may set it down in the first place as a fundamental principle that acceptable obedience to God must proceed from an obedient spirit. Love to God and love to that obedience must prompt the action. The obedience is in the spirit, and obedient action results. The brethren at Rome obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which had been delivered to them. Obedience is before obedient action, and independent of it. It is very possible for men to comply with certain precepts to some selfish end, or to gain some reward, when the heart is not in it. Such action is not obedience to God—is not acceptable with him, and it would not be acceptable even with men. The same may be said of devotion. If the spirit of prayer and supplication is in the heart, the cry unto God for mercy and pardon will result. If it is not the utterance of what is felt, and of a real desire and sense of need, it is not prayer at all. The best and most appropriate words are dead words and mere empty sound if they have no place in the heart of him who utters them. The prayer is in the feeling and sense of need, rather than in the words by which it

is expressed. The spirit of prayer and supplication must precede all sincere prayer, as its spring and source; and all utterances as a mere volition are meaningless and vain. Praise and adoration must have place in the heart first. They are fruits and results of the consciousness of a blessed experience—a sense of favors received. Forms and observances are nothing if not heartfelt. Lip service would be abominable even unto men. Should it be regarded as prayer when people ask of God things of which they not only feel no need, but of which they really have no knowledge? Shall we call it praise to God or adoration when words are uttered and songs are sung that have no place in the life or experience of the singer, and his life no place in them? What interest or profit can there be in dead words and works, or religious exercises and services that have no life in them?

The bulk of the preaching in our day aims not to search the heart and to know what is the mind of the Spirit, but to present inducements to men to engage in the outward forms and services of religion. If one can be induced to attend church services regularly, it is thought to be all that is required. Various exciting topics are announced in advance, to attract the curious, and those with itching ears, and the result is regarded with evidentsatisfaction. No matter what the motive in giving, so that the people give. The price of a dog or a doll baby is accepted as readily as though it were a spiritual sacrifice. Repeating words of prayer that have no place in the heart of the speaker, and the meaning of which is neither felt nor known, is regarded as praying to God; and going to a designated place, that has been set apart as a mourner's place, passes for mourning, and few indeed see any difference. Singing pretty tunes passes for heartfelt praise, and seems to have quite superseded it. The distinction between deep, heartfelt sorrow and distress, and disfiguring our faces to appear unto men to fast, ought to be apparent even to natural men. Gospel preaching certainly ought to bring to light the hidden things of deception, and like devouring fire burn up and consume all outward forms and vain pretenses as the chaff of the threshing-floor. As a sharp sword it should discern and cut in sunder all religious observances in which the heart has no part, as neither acceptable to God nor deserving to be approved of men. Why should not preaching search for reality—for truth? Why should not the ax go to the root of the tree? Shall the penitent, pouring out his soul in supplication to God for mercy, be confounded with those who are merely saying prayers like a parrot? Shall there be no discernment between those that mourn in deep distress on account of their sins and condemned state, and those whose mourning consists in sitting upon a particular seat, and using the ker-

chief for tears that are not there? That word that burns among stubble like devouring fire will be regarded as illiberal and uncharitable; but why so? The world is no better off for all the deceptive and counterfeit religion that it contains. The church is not in need of it. The cause of God and truth will not be benefited by gross imitations and impositions. Godliness is profitable in all things; but a form of godliness, without the power thereof, is not worth anything at all to anybody. The words of prayer, where the spirit is wanting, are lifeless, like a dead body; and the same may be said of all other religious services. No act can be one of obedience where the spirit of obedience is wanting; and of course none of the satisfaction or enjoyment of obedience can be attained. A dead body can be put through the motions of active life, but it will not enter into its enjoyments. Christians know a relationship and fellowship; but if that relationship and fellowship does not exist, will any one enter into the comfort and enjoyment of it by any outward performance? It will not be denied that the minds of men have been blinded and befogged with regard to these things; and yet there is no outcry to the Lord that their eyes might be opened. Men go on with great zeal performing dead works, supposing that they shall have life for them, while they have no life in them. The Redeemer declares that the plants which he has planted are living plants, and that they bear fruit of themselves, and that it is good fruit. Let the word go on, then, and do its work. Nobody prefers chaff to wheat, or dross and tin to gold, if they know what wheat and gold are. Then let the burning work go on. Let there be great searchings of heart. Let all the workings of pride and self-righteousness be exposed to that fire that proceeded out of the mouth of the witnesses, and then indeed may ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked—between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. Then indeed shall the sons of Levi be unto the Lord a peculiar treasure, worshiping him in truth, in sincerity, and in the beauty of holiness.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.  
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

#### CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Delaware Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with the church at Welsh Tract, New Castle County, Delaware, May 23d, 24th and 25th, 1888, to the several associations with whom we correspond, sendeth greeting.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have been once more permitted in the kind providence of our heavenly Father to assemble in an associate capacity, to sit together in sweet communion and fellowship under the droppings of the sanctuary, and to hear the wonderful story of Jesus and his love.

We trust we have been truly edified and comforted in our tribulations by the faithful testimony of the servants of our God, who have come to us in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, preaching Jesus as he is declared in the Scriptures, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. We are still, we trust, in the faith of our fathers, believing that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" and we will be excused if we say that we know of none others who need salvation but poor sinners of Adam's fallen race. Our hope is established upon this precious assurance; for we realize daily that we are poor, helpless sinners, and cannot even so much as think a good thought; realizing constantly, with the apostle, that in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing. But our hope is that in the glorious appearing of the blessed Jesus to raise up his people, we shall be partakers of that resurrection, and be delivered from the bondage of corruption, which we now daily feel, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Brethren, if you can feel to still bear with us, we desire that our correspondence may be continued.

Our next meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Rock Springs, Lancaster Co., Pa., to commence on Wednesday before the fourth Sunday in May, 1889.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Mod.  
P. M. SHERWOOD, Clerk.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please put a notice in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that my residence and post-office address is now northwest corner Eleventh and Powell Streets, St. Joseph, Missouri, instead of No. 2002 Francis Street, as heretofore.

Yours in tribulation and poverty,  
R. M. THOMAS.

#### LARGE HYMN BOOK FOR A DOLLAR, SIX FOR FOUR DOLLARS AND A HALF.

We have just had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

We also have the small type book bound in cloth, which we will send post paid at price stated above. Cash must always accompany the orders. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

#### THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

We have now several hundred of the "Tasks" ready, and will mail to any address on receipt of price. See notice on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JUNE 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF G. BEEBE'S SONS.

THE OPENED GRAVES.

DEAR BROTHER:—Will you please give your views on the passage of Scripture found in Matthew xxvii. 53, 53, more particularly the fifty-third verse, and greatly oblige a brother in hope?

M. C. SANFORD.

MARGARETTVILLE, N. Y.

R E P L Y .

It would afford us pleasure to be able to comply with the wishes of all who desire information upon the important subject of the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ; and especially would it be cause for gratification if we could relieve the minds of any of the dear saints who may be perplexed in seeking to understand the mysteries revealed in the inspired Scriptures. Nothing could be more desirable than the privilege of thus giving a cup of cold water to a trembling disciple of the Redeemer; but it is not in the power of any created being to take of the mysteries revealed by the Spirit of God and show them to the natural mind even of the saints themselves. The apostle Paul could only "comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Cor. i. 4. Without direct revelation nothing can be known concerning the literal circumstances attending the awful event of the crucifying of our Lord but that which is written in the sacred record of the evangelists. Even the plain account given is beyond the comprehension of the natural mind of man. No labor of reason can deduce any reliable conclusions from philosophizing upon the inspired testimony. There is no further fact stated in regard to the wonderful event narrated in this text but the plain declaration. What we may think of it can be of no more importance than what may be thought by any other uninspired mortal. We certainly do humbly accept the statement as divine truth, yet we can no more comprehend its import than we can understand any other point in the great mystery of godliness. It is recorded that "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." If any one can explain to the finite mind of man upon what natural principle one of these notable events occurred, it may be that the others could be likewise accounted for. We are content to leave the matter just where it is left by the inspired record. The darkness from the sixth hour of the day unto the ninth (that is, from noon to three o'clock) has been explained by

science as the result of an eclipse of the sun; but that explanation is as inconsistent as the perjured statement of the soldiers as to what was done while they slept. There can be no question that the same power of God directly wrought all the wonders recorded which also brought our victorious Lord from the depth of death. In his resurrection is the assurance that all for whom he laid down his life shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, and shall be exalted with him in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.—John xvii. 5, 24.

While it is the crowning perfection of the doctrine of Christ that the resurrection of our Redeemer secures the glorious resurrection of every one of his individual saints, it has been purposely left by our Lord as a mystery which was not manifested even to the apostles as in the flesh. Paul had not yet attained to it when he wrote to the saints at Philippi; and it did not yet appear to John what we shall be; but including all saints with himself he could say, "We know that when he [Christ] shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—Phil. iii. 8-14; 1 John iii. 2. The faith of Jesus seeks no more than this. With David, every one who has the Spirit of Christ is content when by faith he is able to say, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."—Psa. xvii. 15. Without this, all the fancied joys of a material paradise would afford no real satisfaction to the true children of God; while to those who really love the Lord there is no greater joy than to be perfectly conformed to the likeness of him in whom they see all the perfection of holiness and beauty.

While the resurrection of Jesus is claimed by the apostle as the conclusive assurance of the resurrection of all his redeemed (1 Cor. xv. 12-22), there is no reference by any inspired authority to the circumstance here recorded as attesting the truth. Indeed, to understand this as the final resurrection would seem to involve the error of Hymeneus and Philetus, which was condemned by the apostle as "profane and vain babbling." Their error consisted in "saying that the resurrection is past already."—2 Tim. ii. 16-18. If this was the final resurrection of those who are spoken of in our text, does it not necessarily lead to this error, at least as far as they are concerned? But we would not be understood as charging any such sentiment upon any brother who may have looked upon this text as an example of the final resurrection. We merely present the objection which seems to our view to be in the way of such an application of this text.

As to the holy city into which these risen bodies went, it does not seem consistent to suppose this designation to apply to any earthly city. Certainly it could not signify that polluted city of Jerusalem, on which

Jesus had pronounced the terrible doom recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. So far from being the "holy city," it is designated as that city "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." The only holy city of which there is any mention made in the New Testament, is that one which John saw "coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—Rev. xxi. 2. By their appearing unto many we cannot understand that they were seen by any except the saints who were favored with the revelation of the Spirit of Christ. So in declaring the manifestation of the Lord after his resurrection, he was never seen by any except his own chosen witnesses. Nor could they see him at any time when they might wish for his presence. He was only seen when it was his pleasure to reveal himself unto his disciples. By personal experience the saints can testify that this is still the manner in which he always appears to them. It is also exclusively "in the holy city" that they are favored with this heavenly vision. Like the old apostle John, they are "in the Spirit on the Lord's day" whenever Jesus displays his gracious presence in their individual experience. Yet they can no more at their own will command that heavenly peace which is found in the presence of Jesus than they can produce sunshine in the darkness of midnight. The infant in its mother's arms can see the light of the sun, but no created being can produce that light. So the feeblest saint can rejoice in the revelation of the presence of the Lord, but not the most favored apostle could see him until he was pleased to manifest himself.

As we suppose that our inquiring brother is established in the hope of the resurrection, we deem it unnecessary to adduce scriptural evidence of the truth that "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." In common with every other point of divine truth, this mystery can be known only by personal experience. Until our own change shall come, we are not capable of receiving this knowledge, and would wish to patiently wait for the infinite mystery to be unfolded to us in the light of our Redeemer's presence, when we shall be perfectly conformed to his divine perfection. The present witness by which this hope is assured is the indwelling Spirit of Christ, which is in us the hope of glory. If we have that seal of the Spirit, it will produce the fruit specified in Galatians v. 22, 23. There can be no mistake in the origin of this fruit, for it is produced by no earthly tree. John says, "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Having this divine seal, we may well afford to wait for the full display of the dazzling brightness of eternal glory, until in the goodness of God

we are prepared to receive that inconceivable revelation. May the Lord grant to brother S. and all his saints that humble submission by which we may be reconciled to patiently wait for the manifestation of his will in the final glory to which he has appointed all them that love his appearing; and to him may we all be enabled to commit the keeping of our souls in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. In the hope of the resurrection which is in Christ Jesus, may we all walk as children of the light, and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

LITTLE CHILDREN.

I WOULD be glad to see your views in the SIGNS on what the New Testament says regarding the spiritual nature of little children, having reference to the Scripture recorded in Matthew xviii. 2-14, especially verses six and ten; also, 1 John ii. 1, 12, 14, &c. There is a very dear brother here who adheres to infant baptism, and that by immersion, but would fain let it go.

COLIN THOMSON.

PAS. CUMBERLAND, N. W. T., Canada.

R E P L Y .

THE writer of this request states that he is two hundred miles from any post-office, and that he knows of no Old School Baptists nearer than brother and sister E. McColl, of Winnipeg, which is three hundred and fifty miles distant. In his isolated situation he must highly appreciate the privilege of hearing from those who are of like precious faith. Doubtless the very full discussion of the subject of infant salvation by brother Keene, in the SIGNS for March first and fifteenth, will afford the desired light upon the subject for which our correspondent seeks; but we would ask of any conscious sinner who may be in doubt upon the subject, Is there any salvation for sinners in any other name but the name of Jesus Christ? The answer must be as it is declared by the apostle Peter, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12. Infants and little children must be saved by the same redemption which is in Christ Jesus, by which all the saints are saved from their sins.

To understand the words of our Lord in the eighteenth of Matthew as teaching infant freedom from sin, is as inconsistent as the literal interpretation of his words to Nicodemus, in John iii. 3. The address was in reply to his disciples, who had asked to know who should be greatest in the kingdom of God. As he ever taught by illustration, he used the helpless "little child" to show the necessity of his disciples being converted from their selfish aspirations before they could "enter into the kingdom of heaven." Then, continuing the same illustration, he gave the law by which his disciples should be governed in all their intercourse with each other.

The principle of carnal covetousness, which seeks advantage for self,

can find no room in the kingdom of heaven. While the subjects of grace are under the control of that spirit of evil which is found in their members, they are not able to enter into the joys which are experienced by them when led by the Spirit of God which was in our Lord Jesus. It is this experimental joy in the Holy Ghost which constitutes the abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is all the heaven into which the saints do enter while they remain in this world of tribulation. There is not room in that blissful kingdom for one strong and full grown saint; but there is abundant entrance there for the innumerable company of the helpless little children who are dependent on the ever present grace of our Lord for every needed good thing. In this understanding of the words of Jesus the experience of the saints is found to agree. While seeking selfish advantage, no true child of God ever found the "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost" which are the revelation of the kingdom of God in his saints. But when converted from that selfish spirit, and made helpless and dependent as a little child, they have never failed to find that heavenly comfort and joy which nature can never give.

In the sixth verse, to which our attention is particularly called, the Lord specifies the peculiarity which marks the "little ones" of whom he speaks. They are those "which believe in" Jesus. It is such a fearful thing to offend one of these that it would be better for the offender "that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." The reason for this solemn declaration is given in the tenth verse. It is, "For I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The offense which is against these little ones is therefore against the Spirit of holiness, which is in them; and this is the "angel of his presence" which saves each of them. As led by the Spirit of God, every saint is one of these little ones; but when walking in darkness, and following the dictates of the carnal mind, they are denying their dependence upon the Lord, and then they do offend against the generation of the children of God.—See Psalm lxxiii. 15.

The passages in First John, to which our inquirer refers, are not left open to the possibility of being construed as addressed to natural little children. While John addresses the saints to whom he writes as "little children," and admonishes them against sin, in the very same sentence he adds, "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Thus it is evident that the very little children whom he addressed were men in their relation to the visibly organized church. While to the superficial reader it may seem that the specification in verses twelve to

fourteen, designating little children, fathers, and young men, is meant to distinguish between the saints according to their natural ages, it will appear to the more careful observer that such an understanding is not consistent with the context in which these same saints are all included together as "little children." This is manifestly signified by that expression in verses eighteen and twenty-eight, in which the apostle includes himself with those whom he calls little children. The experience of those who are taught of the Lord shows them all to be so very little that they are continually made to realize their utter helplessness. Their growth in grace is a constantly increasing realization of their destitution of all things in themselves, and of the abundant fullness which is in Christ for the supply of their every need. Thus the more fully developed the work of the Spirit may be in a disciple of our Lord, the more sensibly he will realize his utter helplessness, and the more clearly will he be able to see that Christ Jesus is the embodiment of the fullness of every grace to supply all his needs. In this experience every one who is led by the Spirit must be brought to realize that he is indeed a child so very little that he can claim to be "less than the least of all saints."

There is no authority given in the New Testament for baptizing any others but believers in the Lord Jesus. If little children can manifest that they have received that faith which is the only source of belief, they are entitled to be received into the fellowship of the church, and should be baptized. Without that evidence, no minister of Christ can administer that ordinance in obedience to the commandment of Jesus. We would advise the friend who wishes to know the truth on this subject to turn away from all the opinions of men, and to look to the inspired rule alone for guidance. In thus seeking, we feel assured that he will find the truth, which is all that can be profitable to them who would obey the word of the Lord.

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

At the commencement of the current volume we published a special rate to our subscribers at which they might procure and forward new subscribers until April 1st, 1888. Many have responded, and sent us in the aggregate several hundred new names; but owing to the extremely severe weather throughout a large portion of the country, many have written us that they have not been able to get around among the brethren. We have therefore decided to extend the time, and will until further notice receive subscriptions for new subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

These terms apply to none but those who are subscribers. Any one whose name is not on our list, and who wishes to take advantage of these rates, can send two dollars for his own subscription, and one dollar each for all other new subscribers.

#### MARRIAGES.

On Tuesday, May 8, 1888, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, at his residence in Occoquan, Va., Mr. Wm. H. Posey and Miss Susie Posey, both of Prince Wm. Co., Va.

#### OBITUARY NOTICES.

Mrs. Sally Matthews was born Jan. 25, 1829, and departed this life Oct. 23, 1885. She was the daughter of Elder Eli Scott, who with his companion were members of Black Rock Church when it was first constituted. Some months before her death she sustained a stroke of paralysis from which she never fully recovered, but in which she was wonderfully strengthened to care for her husband, who passed away after extreme suffering, but a few months before her death. The end suddenly came to her at last, and it was cause for gratitude to her friends that she did not suffer much after the final stroke. Mrs. Matthews had never made a public profession of religion, but no one ever lived out that pure and undefiled religion which is of the heart, more patiently and consistently than did she, in the sight of all her friends. To her was given great trust in God. Her life was beset with many trials, but in all the years that I knew her I never heard a murmuring or complaining or distrustful word from her lips. She believed in the daily providence of God and in the guidance of his Spirit every moment. Whenever I entered her house and conversed with her, knowing how many and severe her trials were, her cheerfulness and uncomplaining submission were a rebuke to me, and also a revelation of the power of divine grace to subdue and reconcile rebellious passions to the cross which God gives us to bear. How much better is such a life than a thousand sermons, if those who preach them lack this life. It was my privilege to speak briefly at her funeral of the hope set before the child of God in the gospel.

ALSO,

Mrs. Eliza Merryman was born Oct. 19, 1820, and died Dec. 25, 1887. She was also the daughter of Elder Eli Scott and sister of the above. Some four or five years ago she was totally paralyzed on one side, but in time rallied so that she could walk and visit her friends and attend the church which she loved so well. Last Christmas day we met for our usual worship at our place of meeting in Baltimore. Just before the hour of service she came in, saying to us to whom she spoke, how glad she was to be able to come, and seeming unusually bright. Soon after going to her seat she complained of dizziness, and in two or three minutes became unconscious. A carriage was called and she was taken home, where she passed away at three that afternoon. It was a sudden blow to her friends and children, but yet they rejoiced that the end was without conscious

suffering; and as one of her daughters said, it was such a comfort to think that their mother had gone straight out from the courts of the Lord here to the courts of the Lord on high. She had gone up to the house of the Lord for worship, which to her was more than meat and drink; but instead of tarrying below the time had come for her to go up higher. Our sister was baptized in the fellowship of Black Rock Church by Elder Samuel Trott more than thirty years ago. I have not been able to learn the exact date. In the full and hearty fellowship of that church she remained all her life. To her also, as well as to her sister, were given hard trials and conflicts, and to her also was given a firm confidence in God and an unwavering trust in his goodness. She believed that every drop of the cup of bitterness came from her Father's love and was held in his hand. If she suffered wrong, she still felt, "It is from the Lord." Many times have I heard her express herself in this way. No one who knew her ever doubted that she was a Christian indeed. Her children call her blessed. She lived to see one daughter added to the people that she loved so well, and to know that others loved the truth and were anxious to share this privilege for themselves. It was my privilege to speak at her funeral, which was at our meeting house in Baltimore. The brothers and sisters and the children of both these dear sisters have good comfort, as they remember that they who die in the Lord are blessed.

ALSO,

Mrs. Mary S. Cole died March 29, 1888, in the eighty-fifth year of her age. She had been failing in body and mind with the general infirmities of age for a number of years, yet death came as it always does, unexpectedly at the last. From the nature of her disease she did not suffer much, but just quietly sank to rest like a wearied child. She was one of the oldest members at Black Rock, having been baptized in the fellowship of the church more than forty years ago, I think, by Elder Eli Scott. As long as she was able she was never absent from her seat in our meetings. She was a woman of but few words, but she always delighted to hear the theme of Jesus and his salvation talked about at her home and at the meetings for worship. I well remember her joy when it pleased God to call her husband into the fold when he was past three score and ten. He has preceded her to the other side. To the last the name of Jesus had power to arouse her when nothing else would. I attended her funeral at Black Rock and tried to preach Jesus, the resurrection and the life. She leaves two children, but for them there is the consolation that death is relief from weakness and entrance into glory for their mother.

"Farewell, farewell, our mother dear,  
Life is sad without you here.  
Oh may we meet in heaven above,  
Where all is joy and peace and love."  
I remain, as ever, your brother in hope through Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It becomes my duty to record the death of my maiden sister, Rachel Sawin, daughter of J. H. and C. Sawin, who departed this life on the third instant at her home near Edinburgh, Indiana, aged fifty-eight years and one month. Her illness had not been considered serious until a few hours before her spirit took its flight. I was immediately informed by telegraph of her condition, and left my home, one hundred and fifty miles away; but ere I reached the old homestead the dark shadow of death had crossed the threshold, and our sister lay silent in his cold embrace. Hers, however, was a calm, sweet repose, for death had been shorn of his vital sting. She died in the triumph of the faith she professed in the year 1858, when she was

received into the fellowship of the old Lewis Creek Church, Shelby County, Ind. She loved and rejoiced in the doctrine of salvation by grace, as held and preached by the Old School Baptists, and hundreds of the "holy nation" and "royal priesthood" will attest her kindness and hospitality in years gone by. She never grew weary of waiting on and caring for the wants of the saints. Her faith and confidence in the Redeemer was immovably established, and we have ample assurance that our loss is her great gain. On our dear, aged mother, who still survives, the stroke is very heavy. She is now eighty years old and quite feeble. May the Lord bless her and give her renewed strength in her declining years.

The funeral of our sister took place from the family residence, on the fifth instant. A comforting discourse was preached by Elder Robert Thompson, from the words of the psalmist, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," after which many sorrowing friends followed the remains to the place of interment.

ALSO,

DIED—At her home in Springfield, Ill., April 7, 1888, sister **Josephine Grinstead**, aged nearly forty years. Sister Grinstead united with the Old School Baptist Church in the state of Kentucky, in the year 1866. Some years after, she with her husband removed to this state (Illinois), where they ultimately united with the Salem Sugar Creek Church, Sangamon County, where she lived a faithful, consistent and worthy life, adorning the profession she had made with an orderly walk and godly conversation, until released from the cares, disappointments and conflicts of these mortal shores. Her illness was of many months' duration, but she never murmured or complained of her lot. Christian patience and fortitude characterized every stage of her sufferings, and all the while her faith in the crucified Redeemer remained unshaken and firm as the eternal hills. She loved the people of God, and to entertain them at her pleasant home was with her an act of love and tenderness, prompted by the unchanging kindness of her Master, whom she delighted to serve.

She left a husband and four children (two sons and two daughters) to mourn this their irreparable loss. May our dear companionless brother and his motherless offspring receive blessings fully commensurate with this their day of grief and sorrow. These blessings God only can send. He only can subdue and drive back the dark tide of affliction that rolls between us and our eternal home.

On the occasion of the funeral I tried to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing friends from the words, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

ALSO,

DIED—At the home of the parents, Springfield, Ill., April 8, 1888, aged nine months, after a lingering illness, **Louise Lewis**, infant daughter of Wm. T. and Malissa Stout Lewis.

The bright, patient little sufferer, though gone, "is not dead, but sleepeth." May the silent, suppressed sorrow and anguish of the grief-stricken parents be turned unto joy by the presence of him who affords the only panacea for such heart wounds as these. Thus may they be led to know that "all is well with the child," and that

"In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,

By guardian angles led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,

She lives, whom we called dead."

J. G. SAWIN.

LOXA, Ill., April 10, 1888.

SISTER **Nancy E. Johnson**, relict of the late Elder John F. Johnson, departed

this life April 22, 1888, near Clay Village, Ky., aged 75 years, 4 months and 22 days. She died of consumption, after an illness of about three months.

She was born in Virginia, Nov. 3, 1812. Her maiden name was Bullock. She was left a widow three times. She was married first to William M. Kent; and again to Lewis Neal; and again to Elder John F. Johnson. Elder Johnson died Sept. 27, 1881.

She united with the Old School Baptist Church, at Old Bethel, Shelby Co., Ky., in 1804, and was baptized by Elder John Holland. She remained firm in the doctrine and fellowship of Jesus and the apostles and disciples till the day of her death. None perhaps led a more peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and honesty, than did this dear old sister and mother in Israel.

Possessing the genuine hospitality both of old Virginia and Kentucky, and above all having in her heart an abundance of the grace of God, her home was for many years a welcome and pleasant retreat for the saints of the living God, and especially was it a most desirable resting place for the weary ones, who labor in word and doctrine.

No doubt the fond remembrance still lingers in the hearts of many of the servants of the most high God of enjoyable hours spent with her and Elder Johnson during the years of their sojourn together, and after his departure.

Her life was characterized by such a happy blending of precious qualities that none could come into her presence without being made more or less sensible of the restraining effects of the christian graces, with which the Lord had so richly blessed her. But while all who knew her felt to prefer her above themselves, yet she disclaimed any worth or merit in herself, but sought the privilege to sit at the feet of her brethren, both by word and deed, and to serve them, which was her delight.

During her sickness I visited her, and she sometimes expressed that there was some darkness of mind, but even during these seasons she realized the presence of an abiding hope, which sustained her; and no doubt when the curtains of mortality were being rolled back she saw, as never before, that Jesus was indeed her hope of glory. At that time she opened her eyes, as from a slumber, and gave one brief and anxious gaze, as though looking into the infinite beyond, and then closed them, and gently passed from the realities of time to those of a blessed immortality.

Being absent when she died, I spoke in her memory at Bethel on the first Sunday in May, from Psalm iii. 10.

"What cheering words are these!

Their sweetness who can tell?

In time and to eternal days,

'Tis with the righteous well."

ALSO,

BROTHER **H. B. Morton**, of Shelby Co., Ky., was born Nov. 29, 1821, and died Oct. 17, 1887.

He united with the church at Beech Creek, Shelby Co., Ky., about the year 1835, but afterwards removed his membership to the church at Bethel, where it was at the time of his death.

He was married on May 25, 1848, to Miss Martha L. Robertson, who died in 1852, leaving two little children. His second wife and one daughter (Mrs. J. W. Robertson) survive him.

Brother Morton was held in high esteem among his neighbors and in the church. He was regarded as a strong believer in the doctrine which had been his delight for over a half-century. He was perhaps as faithful as is common among us, considering his circumstances. He was very feeble for several years before his death, but was so energetic that he kept going, and traveled some distance to attend his meetings. The church and the entire community realize the loss

sustained by the removal of this good man.

He was confined to his bed but fourteen days, during which time he suffered greatly, but was patient and resigned to the will of the Master, and trusted him for strength to endure unto the end.

His last words were to repeat the first verse of the hymn, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!" and immediately fell asleep, to awake in the paradise of God.

Though he is missed in the church and in the family circle, yet we could not wish him back again. He is now at rest. May the dear bereaved ones, when called away, be brought into eternal rest with Jesus.

Brother Morton was buried in the cemetery at Shelbyville, with others of his family gone before. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."  
P. G. LESTER.

DIED—At her son's, brother Preston Munkers, sister **Mary Munkers**. She was born into this world of sin and death in Campbell Co., Tenn., Oct. 1, 1803, and died in Scio, Linn Co., Oregon, March 8, 1888, being eighty-five years, five months and seven days old at the time of her decease. She lived in Campbell Co., Tenn., until about the year 1806, when she with her father, John Croley, moved to Clayborn Co., Tenn., where they lived till the year 1816, when she with her father moved to Howard County, Missouri, where she was joined in wedlock with brother Benjamin Munkers, July 12, 1818, by whom she had eleven children, seven of which survive her (five boys and two girls), who with a number of grandchildren mourn the loss of an affectionate mother and grandmother; but they sorrow not as others who have no hope, for she died as she had long lived, in hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave.

After the subject of this notice had united in marriage with Benjamin Munkers, they removed to Carrel County, Missouri, then to Platte County, Missouri. In the spring of 1846 they, with their family of nine children (two having died in Missouri), left the United States of America, passing over the Missouri River, entering the domains of the Aborigines, to travel upwards of two thousand miles through a race of cruel savage red men, over barren, sandy desert lands, and cloud-piercing, rocky mountains, infested by millions of ravenous wolves of all sizes and colors, from a snow white to a jet black, and where herds of buffalo could be seen to the amount of several thousands. Having gained their destination, they settled in that portion of Oregon called the Willamette Valley, lying between the Cascade Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, in that portion of the valley which was after called Champoeg County, but now called Marion County, where she and her husband, brother Benjamin Munkers, lived many years, until by reason of age and infirmity it was thought best for them to leave their home with their youngest son, and live the remainder of their days with their oldest son. So they removed to Scio, Linn County, and lived with their oldest son and daughter-in-law, brother Preston and sister Barbary Munkers, where they had the best of care taken of them until they took their last remove to a better country, to come into possession of an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for them from the foundation of the world. Sister Mary Munkers made a public profession of her faith in Christ about the year 1822, being baptized in the fellowship of a Regular Baptist Church, where from that day till the day of her death she has ever remained a worthy and faithful member. I first became acquainted with her in the autumn of 1848, an acquaintance of forty years very agreeably spent. I was the pastor of the church of her membership for a number of years, in Marion County, also in Scio,

Linn County. She was a woman of sore afflictions, which could not be surpassed, if indeed equaled. She spent forty years of sore afflictions of a nervous character under my immediate observation. She was an object of real misery, a mere skeleton. One would not have thought, to see her in 1848, that she could live over a month; but God's time to call her home was set to the year 1888. In 1848 brother Benjamin Munkers appeared to be a stout, healthy man, but God called him home first.

At the special request of the sister, I tried to preach on the occasion of her death, to a large assembly of mourners, from Rom. vi. 22, 23, after which her remains were conveyed to their last resting place on earth, followed by a large concourse of mourners.

JOHN STIPP.

Scio, Oregon, April 14, 1888.

"HIDE not thy face from me: put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help: leave me not; neither forsake me, O God of my salvation."

A greatly afflicted brother, one that had endured much suffering, has been delivered out of his afflictions, and saved out of his sufferings, having departed to be with Christ, which is far better.

Our dear brother, **John J. Arnold**, after much suffering and affliction, departed this life, at his residence in St. Joseph, the tenth day of March, aged 76 years, 11 months and 10 days. He was born in Logan Co., Ky., March 30, 1811; lost his parents when quite young; was brought up by an uncle, who took him to Woodford Co., Ky., whence he emigrated in 1836 to Missouri, and settled, first in Clay Co. and a few years afterward in Platte Co., where he lived many years, and through the blessing of the Lord upon his industry and economy, accumulated a handsome estate. A few years ago when he felt he was becoming too infirm to longer follow the active life in farming he had before done, he moved to St. Joseph, where he closed his earthly pilgrimage.

Brother Arnold received a hope in Jesus, probably more than thirty-five years ago. He joined Unity Church, Platte Co., Mo., and was baptized May 7, 1853, by Elder P. J. Burruss, for whom he ever entertained a most tender and affectionate regard. His membership continued with that church till his death, and he retained the confidence and fellowship of his brethren and sisters in a remarkable degree through many trials and temptations.

He was not a fluent talker on the subject of religion, nevertheless, he gave clear and ample evidence of a good hope through grace, and of the work of the Spirit in an experimental knowledge of the truth. He loved the doctrine of God our Savior, and those who held and proclaimed it, and has been a patron of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for many years. The writer has been acquainted with him for more than thirty years, and has enjoyed many tokens of his love and esteem, having often been the recipient of his bounty and liberality.

The wife of his youth survives him; his partner and companion in the journey of life, the sharer of his toils and trials. They have no children.

He leaves, I believe, one aged brother, and quite a large circle of relatives and friends, besides the church at Unity, and the brethren and sisters generally, to lament his departure. But "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," and therefore we have hope and comfort.

The writer tried to speak a few words concerning "Jesus and the resurrection," to quite a number of the citizens of St. Joseph, at his residence the day he was buried, March 12, 1888.

In hope of eternal life,

R. M. THOMAS.

St. JOSEPH, Missouri.

**DIED**—At her residence in Washington, D. C., Feb. 8, 1888, at 9:30 a. m., sister **A. E. Frankland**, in the eighty-fourth year of her age, having been an invalid perfectly helpless a little over five years. The deceased was baptized by Elder George at Lower Broad Run, Fauquier Co., Va., before the division between us and the New School Baptists. When the separation took place she remained with the Old School, and soon after went with them to Upper Broad Run, under the pastoral care of the late Elder Leachman.

Sister Frankland continued a member of the Upper Broad Run Church to the day of her death. She was devoted to the truth, and loved to converse upon the things of the kingdom as long as she was able to talk. In her last sickness she was tenderly cared for by her children, who spared no effort that would add to her comfort. She leaves three daughters and one son to mourn their loss in her death. I attended her funeral and spoke in the presence of a congregation of brethren, relatives and friends, from Hebrews xi. 15, 16.

Thus there has passed from the weary scenes of earth another aged pilgrim, who has joined the bright throng around the "great white throne" of eternity. Above the gloom of the grave, and beyond the turmoils of earth, shines in inexpressible glory the resurrection of the dead, where the weary and heavy laden pilgrim shall find the haven of unending rest.

WM. M. SMOOT.

OCCOQUAN, Va., May 11, 1888.

#### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

G. C. Farthing 2, J. A. Bennett 2, A. B. McKinney 2, Mrs. I. T. Swicord 2, N. R. Harrison 2, R. H. Manning 5, Elder J. R. Respass 16 75.—Total \$31 75.

#### ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Mt. Gilead Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with the Mt. Gilead Church, two and one-half miles east of Hersman, Brown Co., Ill., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in August (8th), 1888, and continue in session three days.

Trains from the east will be met at the Wabash depot at Hersman, at 8:20 p. m., Tuesday, and 9:15 a. m., Wednesday; from the west, at 6:02 p. m., Tuesday, and 6:12 a. m., Wednesday. Those coming at other times will inquire for brethren D. W. Owens, Jas. Harper or John Jackson. NATHAN PERRY.

FOR the information of all who may wish to attend the Siloam Association of Regular Predestinarian Baptists of Oregon, for the year 1888, we will state that by an arrangement of the churches composing said association a change has been made in the time of holding the same. Therefore the 35th annual meeting of said association will be held with the Siloam Church, at Harmony School House, some three miles northeast of Mt. Angel, in Marion County, Oregon, commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in June, 1888, worship to begin at 11 o'clock a. m.

Those coming on the Narrow Gauge R. R. will be met by brethren at Mt. Angel station with teams to convey them to the place of meeting.

All Old School or Primitive Baptists are cordially invited to attend our association and join with us in the solemn worship of the Lord our God.

W. S. MATTHEWS, Mod.

E. T. T. FISHER, Clerk.

#### TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days meeting of the Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, with the Middleburgh Church, in Schoharie County, N. Y., to commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in July. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us.

M. P. COOPER.

#### YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Clovesville Old School Baptist Church, on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in June (23d and 24th), 1888. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and sisters, especially brethren in the ministry.

Those coming by rail will be met at Griffin's Corners Station on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning, the day of the meeting.

It is expected that the Halcott Church will unite with us, and not have any yearly meeting there this year.

O. F. BALLARD, Clerk.

#### A FIVE DAYS DEBATE ON CHURCH IDENTITY,

In book form, from the stenographic report, between J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages, the same size as the "Editorials," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1888.

NO. 13.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE SURE MERCIES OF DAVID.

My sincere desire is that I may write the truth, that what I say may be in accord with the Scriptures of divine truth. Test it, brethren, by that infallible rule. It is my desire to address these lines to you, brethren Beebe, and to all lovers of the truth who may read them. How many blessed, cheering thoughts cluster around this theme. It has engaged the attention of the children of God, from righteous Abel down to the humble heirs of promise in this nineteenth century; and when time shall be no more, then eternity will be none too long in which the redeemed from every kindred, tribe and nation shall worship the Lamb of God. Although prophets and apostles were so highly favored, and spake as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance, yet all time will fail to demonstrate to poor, finite minds and capacities the length, the breadth, the height, the depth, of this theme; for it hath not entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared and holds in reserve for them that love him. Yes, my dear sister, my dear brother, eternal ascriptions of peace and adoration for the sure mercies of David will be the sweet employ of the redeemed who go up that highway which Isaiah saw. "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there." "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." O, my soul, there is so much in this that I am lost in contemplation, not knowing where to commence; but if I can only say a few words that will strengthen, cheer and comfort some of the dear and tried children, I will not have written in vain. Trembling child, do you not love to think of God's mercies? Does it not just suit your case? Did you not think yours was an extreme or outside case? Had you or have you any righteousness or merit of your own to plead? Did he not take you up out of a horrible pit? Did he not put a new song in your mouth, even praise to his holy name? How heart-cheering to think of the sure mercies of David. What a world of meaning, comfort and consolation is in all the blessed

promises concerning the sure mercies of David. God's irrevocable, eternal word has gone forth. His covenant is ordered in all things and sure. How God-honoring is this grand truth that his mercies are sure to all the heirs of promise; and how full of comfort and consolation is this thought to the thirsty, hungry, weary, heavy laden, tried and tempest-tossed child of the King. In the language of Paul we can say, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." For, as the apostle Peter says, we are "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." O who can tell of all that is treasured up in the sure mercies of David? Peter says that the angels desired to look into these things.

Let us search the Scriptures, for they testify of this Jesus, the sure mercies of David; they testify of him at great length; they testify so amply and fully that a wayfaring man need not err therein. In writing of this Jesus, this Rod of the stem of Jesse, I will try to express myself in a manner not to offend the most fastidious. I will present such thoughts as are susceptible of proof by the plain declarations of holy writ. Now if any of us be weak in the faith, or wavering, let us prayerfully read, search and study the sure word of God, and go to him in prayer, who knows our every weakness, and upbraideth not, and he will hear and bless. When we read the Bible, and contemplate this adorable character, the Son of God, let us believe what it says about him, even if we have to give up all the cherished traditions that have been learned of men. Let us cleave to the truth and discard errors. Let us follow Paul's example, who, although brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, did renounce his former teachings, and was "determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." O I do wish that all who attempt to preach would determine to do the same thing. Let us notice briefly, too, some of the testimony concerning this God-man, Christ Jesus, and more especially the relation that he bears to the

church, with all that it implies, as her Savior and Redeemer. "The Word was made flesh;" and yet, as God, he is one with the everlasting Father. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus took part of the same. He is our Elder Brother. Consequently that implies that we are of the same parentage, the same family, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, with all that that means. That word "joint heirs," is a very full word. And again, we are told of "his inheritance in the saints." The church is his bride, his spouse, members of his body. He loved her with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness hath he drawn her. "His loving-kindness, O how great!" It knew no beginning, and will know no end.

A marriage presupposes a choice on the part of the bridegroom, as well as an acceptance on the part of the bride. Here we have election on the part of Christ. It presupposes a love on both sides. It implies perfect trust, fealty, and all the heart's devotion, on the part of the bride. He loved his people while they were dead in sins, while they were yet his enemies. "His loving-kindness, O how great!" By his Spirit he quickens whom he will. He says his people shall be willing in the day of his power. "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts." Just as when he said, "Let there be light, and there was light." He has all power in heaven and in earth. I love to think of him as a Savior that is able to save to the uttermost. He came to seek and to save those that were lost: a specific work. And being omniscient and omnipotent, he saw the end from the beginning, and he cannot be frustrated by all the hosts of darkness. Does he need any assistance from poor, puny mortals? You need not tell the poor, mourning one, whom the Spirit has quickened and enlightened, that he may be lost. No indeed; for he already realizes his lost and undone condition, and bewails it, and cries for mercy. "Thou Son of David, have mercy," is his prayer. And I am so glad that that petition of each penitent sinner is heard and answered. His ear is ever open to the cry of his children. He grants to us repentance. We believe by the working of his power. He is our way, our life, our all in all. He is our Prophet, Priest and King. He is our Advocate with the Father. And can

we doubt the result? He paid the penalty and cancelled our debt. "Jesus paid it all," is the song of the child of God here, and will be the refrain of the bride throughout eternity. This was all brought to view to John on the isle of Patmos. He is our resurrection, our life everlasting. It is no wonder that this favored John fell as one dead, when he caught a glimpse of the glories of the sure mercies of David and his bride, the elect lady, that great multitude that could not be numbered, with all the hosts of heaven, with all that heaven seemed to him then. O what a world of testimony we have of this Savior and his church, the bride, the Lamb's wife, in the Scriptures. What a store-house from which to draw, from the beginning of Genesis to the last of Revelation. There the wondrous plan, as drawn by Jehovah, is stretched and outlined by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. These are they that testify of this Jesus, our Savior. These are they that tell us of the dealings of God with his peculiar people, the Jews. These are they that were given for our instruction and guidance, for our comfort and consolation; not to give us eternal life. Jesus told the Jews that they thought that in them (the Scriptures) they had eternal life; but he told them plainly that these are they that testified of him. These are they that tell of us, of this love of Christ for his chosen ones. These are they that tell us of the sure mercies of David. These are they that tell us that salvation will God appoint for walls for his people. From them we learn that we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. From them we learn that the union between Christ and his church is based upon the irrevocable and irrefragable word and oath of the omnipotent. One who inhabiteth eternity. From them we learn of the covenant between the Father and the Son. From them we learn that Jesus came into the world for a certain, specific work. He came to do the will of his Father, to save all that the Father had given him. Will we dare be presumptuous and impious enough to think or say that Jesus' mission was a failure? Hear his dying prayer to the Father, read and ponder it, and then turn to the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke and read that; study it well and ponder it. O there is so much in that portion of the Scriptures. He tells the two disciples, "O

fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." That must have been a wonderful sermon. Is it any wonder that when their eyes were opened, and they knew Jesus, that they said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" Now this brings to view another thought. He is the resurrection and the life everlasting: for when he arose from the grave, a conqueror of death, hell and the grave, then was Omnipotence pledged to bring us off more than conquerors through him that loved us and gave himself for us, and is now risen and seated at the right hand of the Father. And be astonished, O my soul, at the thought that the church, the new Jerusalem, is composed of the sons and daughters of Adam's race. How strong is that family tie. The fiends of earth and hell combined cannot break up that family circle. God has placed salvation in Zion. How sweet and close is that tie. We shall be like Christ. And he shall say, Enter into the joys of thy Lord, and sit down on my throne.

It is no wonder that the angels desired to look into these things, the wonders and mysteries of the scheme of redemption, with all it means. O how weak is tongue or pen to portray the sublime and beautiful in this theme.

The poet seemed to speak by inspiration when he wrote, "Rock of Ages." Every heaven-born soul that ever read it thoughtfully, or sang with the proper understanding of it, has been thrilled by it. This theme is so comprehensive and so cumulative that it is inexhaustible. We are lost in wonder and amazement when we try to view it in the dim outlines and glimpses that are vouchsafed to our weak and finite minds. But there is enough to cheer and comfort the poor, weak, little ones, who have a birthright in the sure mercies of David; for we have the blessed assurance of the great I AM, that it is his good pleasure to give us the kingdom. We are hedged about by the eternal *shalls* and *wills* of Jehovah. The everlasting arms are beneath, and his hand is turned upon the loved ones. I love to think, in this connection, of this word "sure." There is rest and peace in the very thought; it is satisfying. All other ground is sinking sand.

"His oath, his covenant and blood,  
Support me in the whelming flood;  
When all around my soul gives way,  
He then is all my hope and stay.  
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;  
All other ground is sinking sand."

It is true that we can only see in part; but O how cheering and consoling to us are these seasons of re-

freshing, when this Son of righteousness rises with healing in his wings. Some say, "I care but little about doctrinal points and questions, and I do wish the preachers and papers were not so full of doctrine." And in one sense, perhaps, they are correct; for they do not care for nor love the doctrine and teachings of the Bible. Some are willing to receive the doctrines and teachings of the modern schools of theology, and therein ignore the plain teaching and doctrine of the Son of God, who spake as never man spake. The gospel of "the sure mercies of David" in its simplicity and entirety is the gospel of grace, free grace, unmixed with any human or creature righteousness or merit. The blood of Jesus Christ alone cleanses us from sin. He paid all the debt. "All to him I owe." He made the atonement; we do not atone. He finished the work that he came to do. He made no failure. He left nothing to chance. He wrought out a perfect righteousness wherewith to clothe each heir and joint heir with himself. These heirs were chosen in him before the world was made. He loved them with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness will he draw each one in time. As they are developed in their natural birth, just so surely will they be born again. "Ye must be born again." Will any person be so blasphemous and presumptuous as to say, I can regenerate myself, I can save myself, or at least I can reject the offered salvation, and thus lose my soul? Jesus said, "Ye must be born again," in order to see his kingdom. That is the work of God alone, and cannot be hindered by any creature. I am glad that is true. There is no risk, no chance, no uncertainty, no perhaps, nothing fortuitous, no contingency, no condition or conditions. It is sure. Is it any wonder then that I say, I love this word "sure?" His people were ten thousand talents in debt, and had nothing wherewith to pay; were bankrupt. Jesus became poor, that they might become rich. You see he had a purpose. He is the God of purpose. He is infinite in power. We are only weakness. We are sold under sin, dead in trespasses and in sins. He alone can quicken the dead sinner. We are blind. He alone can give sight to the blind. We are deaf. He alone can unstop the deaf ears. We cannot love God, unless he first loves us. The natural man receiveth not the things of God, until he gives him his Spirit; for they are foolishness to him before Christ is revealed in him the hope of glory. The natural man does not hunger and thirst after righteousness, any more than Satan does; consequently there is no blessed promise for him. It is only the quickened sinner that has that hungering and thirsting; consequently he has the blessed promise of Christ on the mount, and here we have "the sure mercies of David."

Christ never offered anybody eternal salvation. He brought salvation to as many as the Father gave him. No more, no less; a certain, sure salvation to all the heirs that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The family circle would not be complete if one of the heirs refused or rejected Christ. The bare thought of conditional salvation is dishonoring to God and is untrue. Now why it is that some children of God can feed upon false doctrines, is passing strange to me. How can they affiliate with those who teach a conditional salvation? Why do they wish to apologize for those who preach sound doctrine? How can they listen so patiently to those who preach a conditional salvation, and yet are impatient when hearing the truth proclaimed? Why do they manifest no interest in the doctrine and teaching of God? They have become traditionized. They have ceased to ask of God when they lack wisdom. This Jesus spake and taught as never man spake and taught. He spoke authoritatively. He told his disciples what his mission was. He told them of the work he came to do. He explained the Scriptures to them. He told Peter how it was that he was a believer and a child of God. He appeared to Paul, and Paul did not confer with flesh and blood, but he preached Jesus. He did not stop to inquire of men what preaching he should preach. Neither did Peter and the other disciples preach any other things than God commanded them to do. This doctrine of Jesus was not popular in their day. Did Peter and Paul make any mistake or utter a lie when they told us that salvation is not conditional? Peter says that we are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and are kept by the power of God. What a precious and comforting thought is that He says that we were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. Again, "who by him [Jesus] do believe in God." Again, "Being born again," "by the Word of God." And he tells us that this "Word of the Lord endureth forever; and this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you." Could language be more conclusive? This "Word of the Lord" was made flesh; that is, it is Jesus that dwelt amongst men. Read Paul's epistle to the Ephesian brethren. He tells us of the work of this Jesus, "the sure mercies of David." He tells us that we were chosen before the foundation of the world, that we have redemption through the blood of Christ alone, "according to the riches of his grace;" "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" "which he hath purposed in himself;" that we "believe according to the working of his mighty power." He does not tell us of any offered salvation, that we may accept or comply with conditions or overtures of mercy, and thereby

gain heaven, or on the other hand refuse or reject Christ, and thus damn ourselves eternally. He tells us of "the sure mercies of David." Jesus says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, hath everlasting life." Jesus did not preach a conditional salvation. Jesus comes in majesty, and yet how sweetly, with healing in his wings. He alone can kill us to the love of sin, and make us alive in true holiness. He opens the prison doors and brings out the captives. God's plan is sure. As many that were ordained to eternal life will believe. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." And negatively, we are told that it is not for anything that we can do. We are told that when we have done all that is commanded and required of us, we are unprofitable servants; that "to fear God and keep his commandments is the whole duty of man." "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Let us give God the glory. We have Jesus' promise that he will send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to minister to the saints and succor them in their temptations, and will bring them off conquerors over all opposition. I love to think of the fact that they whose names are written in the book of life will not be arraigned at the bar of God in the last day. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever."

J. G. WILLIAMS.

QUINCY, ILL., June 10, 1888.

#### EVIDENCES OF FAITH.

THE venerable apostle Paul has given us a very appropriate outline of true christian faith and its effects, in his letter to Titus. Brief, but pointed, and, like all the inspired writings, it gives the weight of divine authority to each unequivocal statement thus set forth. It cannot be expected that his words were then accepted by the carnally minded, either in the church or out of it, in that day; nor can it be hoped that human nature has improved in our day, so that they will be universally accepted now. There were causes for plainness then, as there are causes for plainness now; but the apostle wrote, as he always preached, with but one object in view, and that was to set forth uncorrupted truth in all its bearings upon the character of God and the character of men, without favoritism or personal regard. No favors of the past could induce him to spare the present guilty, and no abuse of the past could make him overlook the present love and zeal of the truly repentant. A suitable example of righteousness for every child of God. Not being a "time server," he sought no flattery, and

consequently avoided no evidence essential to the cause of God. Like a faithful witness, he did not arise with apologies, as men of the world often do in court, and for fear of some loss of personal favor try to cover or suppress a part of the truth. What would a court of justice think of a witness who would plead that, as the defendant was a personal friend, he feared he might be offended if he should testify against him, and therefore refuse to give the evidence of truth? The apostle was enabled in all the simplicity, and yet in all the authority of his divine summons, to stand before us to answer the requirements of his oath; not as men of the world swear, in the fear and terror of law-threatened punishment, but in the holy love of that law that God had written in his heart. The case I now refer the brethren and sisters to is a fruit case; for the fruits of the Spirit are the evidences of its nature. Therefore let us listen to the language of the apostle in his introductory evidence to Titus. "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness." Let us notice also that the only criterion of judgment is godliness; and the further thought and only legitimate conclusion is, that "godliness" has embodied in it all that pertains to the being, character and nature of God, that underived, self-existent, infinite and only God, whose authority is vested in his own creative right; and this right is suggested in every word of the Scriptures, as well as in every work of nature. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse. Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

There are some who have gone so far astray as thus to belittle the sovereignty of God. In their vain imaginings they have dared to judge the character of God by the same law by which they judge of his inferior creatures, and limit his righteousness even as they dare to limit the righteousness of man, or birds, or beasts, or creeping things.—See Rom. i. 20-23, &c. In reading the following verses of the nature of men in Paul's day, we have no reason to doubt its truth; for there are abundant evidences of the same in our day. But vain cavilers have more and more increased, to the troubling of the saints with questions like this, "If God should pre-

destinate that men should commit all the abominations enumerated in the verses following, would it not make him the author of those acts, and therefore make him unholy?" No doubt there are many dear little ones who are startled at such a thought; for the child of God cannot but believe that God is holy, and therefore they are at a loss to know how to meet the vile slander against his character; for they are assured in the Scriptures that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and, until these questions arose, they were content with thoughts of his holiness and righteousness in all his works, be they as they may; for it is "God that doeth it, that men may fear before him." Dear child of God, go back to your first fear of God, and all these queries are answered; for the Spirit of God bore testimony of his election when he called you to behold him as the Creator of all, and therefore the rightful disposer of all. When you saw your sinfulness, you did not murmur against God, even though you saw that he had determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of your habitation, and that that habitation was in a sinful world. How did you feel then? Could you receive it as God's righteous will, as his purpose, as his plan of grace, wherein he had predestinated to save you? This was to you an evidence of faith. This was where you received the spirit of reconciliation. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Rom. v. 10. Who then can say that sin was not in the predestination of God? Then, dear child of God, do not judge God; for he is not, never was, nor ever can be, under the same laws that we found ourselves under. He was God before any law ever existed. He was before all things, and by him all things consist, even that law by which we saw ourselves sinners, and by which we were tried, and by which we were condemned. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Let us reason together if we can. If God foreknew all things, he foreknew that he would make man, and had a purpose in making him. He also foreknew how to make man for that purpose. He also had ample power to make man as he wanted or proposed to make him. Therefore, as God has said it, we must believe it, and be reconciled to it, that he made man in his own image. For there were none save the Godhead to direct him. He made him with just that power, and just that wisdom, and just that limit of power and wisdom, that he purposed to give in order to fill the purpose for which he made him. Now, we may ask, If God foreknew that man would sin, if he made him capable of sinning, or gave him power to sin, why did he not make him so that he could not sin, if he designed

that he should not sin? I admit that this is but a question put to silence our carnal questionings; but the assertion of the matter is that God created man with all of man's surroundings, and gave man a law for a purpose; and Paul tells us what God's purpose was; for he asserts, in Romans v. 20, "Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Now, dear saint, read this verse carefully, and you will see that the law and the offense, and sin and grace, are all equally enumerated as being in God's purpose; therefore they are all equally embraced in his predestination. There are many very precious passages of Scripture showing how the Lord performs his purpose; but these will doubtless occur to the reader without reciting here. I only wish to bring this conclusion to this point in testimony to the case in hand, to "try the spirits."—1 John iv. 1. What spirit can perplex the child of God except the spirit of antichrist, or the spirit that can oppose Christ, that can arise against the true and only God, that can without fear blaspheme his holy sovereignty and will, whatever that will may be?

To return to the words of Paul to Titus, we see again that godliness is conformity to God as he is, and therefore accepts of his law as he gives it. Godliness does not consist in a perfect change of natural into spiritual, nor of total extinction of flesh and a substitution of the Spirit; but by the implantation of spiritual or divine life, the old man is so put off that there is not that liberty or life in the gratification of its nature that was once the only law that ruled or enjoyed its self-conceited liberty in the lusts and the gratifications thereof. These emotions, although they might lead men to passable respectability in moral life before men, would not stand the scrutiny of God's law when written in the heart. There the light of the revelation of the glory of God sheds such light that every motive as well as act is judged as ungodly; for it savors of selfishness, of covetousness, which is idolatry. This judgment is after godliness, and is an evidence that God dwells in them, walks in them, worketh in them, to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

In speaking of predestination, a sister, not long since, referred to Jer. xxxii. 35, where the prophet by inspiration warned the children of Israel against idolatry. She felt at a loss to know how to reconcile it with predestination, thinking there were some things enumerated there that God had not predestinated. Jeremiah was not talking of what God had or had not predestinated, but what he had not commanded nor thought to command. It is conceded by all professed Old School Baptists that God foreknew all things; but if this passage is to be construed to oppose the absolute predestination

of all things, it will be as clearly seen that it opposes the foreknowledge of all things. Let us read carefully. God said by the prophet, "And they built the high places of Baal which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin." Now while we believe that all these abominations were in the first, great, whole plan of God, and thereby predestinated, we do not believe that God ever personally commanded them to do them, nor ever so far changed his mind or thought to command them to do them. This deduction is evidently set forth by all the context, and in no place contradicted in the Bible; for he is of one mind, and changeth not. But let us go farther, and we will see that while Israel were in their temporal, national existence, they were but a part of the plan, and not the fullness of God's plan of salvation. So we read on and find in the verse after that God continues his will, like one who arranges many painful experiences, in order to perfect the course and instruction of the whole. "And now therefore, thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again into this city, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

Dear, tried, trembling and fearful one, if any part of this means you, it all means you. If God has put his fear into your heart, it is because it is only a part of the whole plan of your experience, eternally fixed in God's mind; and now, day by day, it is brought to your understanding by experience. You and I can have our minds refreshed in the knowledge of God's holy law, as we see our daily sinfulness, and God's holiness, even in the same light that God sees us. God is light, and his laws and mind change not; but our nature is darkness, and needs to be removed, or put off, day by day, by the power of that light that God's unwritten law provides for us. We need to see that we are kept by the power of God as an active, quickening principle of life immediately from him, as the author or immediate source of our strength for good

Our daily weaknesses, our sense of sinfulness, our knowledge of depravity, arise from that lack of strength that our Adamic nature inherits, and it is all in God's plan. It is all in God's purpose to instruct us, not to inform himself. With this in view, we are better prepared to understand how God would not consent that the children of Israel should sacrifice their children to Baal; for through their transgressions of misplaced faith he perfected their most perfect worship of himself, as their only God and Savior.

The conclusion then of the matter is that God never commanded anything but that, in his own time and way, he fulfilled; and so the substance of all prophecy points to Christ, of whom it is said, "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Absolute predestination of all things secures the perfection and accomplishment of the work; and that doctrine and that work cannot be perfectly understood until it is perfectly fulfilled; but true faith believes it; true love of God rejoices in it. Thus this doctrine is in perfect harmony with godliness, and is the base of true hope. Paul continues his testimony, by a blending of his hope with the predestinated glory. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." What unequivocal words of testimony, establishing the inheritance of eternal life upon the immutability of God, and revealed through the moving of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of his children; and confirmed by the daily operations of faith, as God himself keeps and leads them. These trials of faith are of many and sore peculiarities, and Paul enumerates some of them in his evidence, showing that Titus should closely examine all candidates for office, and all applicants for admittance into the church, as well as to closely watch over the saints, to detect every deceiver, warn the unruly, exhort the timid, erring, and denounce the hypocritical and the vicious; to expose heresies, approve the faithful, encourage good works, and to cheer the despondent and the needy. All these conditions have been in the church somewhere, ever since its first organization, with Christ as its visible head; and so we may find continual opportunities for the evidences of faith, in order to test the faithfulness of the faithful, and the apostacy of the erring. There was a Judas, the betrayer; Peter, the reprover of Christ; Thomas, the doubter; Stephen, the timid; as well as Matthew, who forsook worldly office for a poor pilgrim's life; John, the beloved and confiding disciple; Philip, the inquiring one; all illustrative of the varied conditions of men who have been associated with our Lord in his earthly pilgrimage, and all to show Christ's matchless condescension to men of low estate. Even Matthew's high and

lucrative office, in the esteem of men was far beneath the high and holy nativity of Christ. Direct from the court of heaven, he left his divine glory that he had with the Father before the world began, and took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. These he finds where he always knew they were, but reveals himself as their Savior, calls them unto his holy service, and while they are made willing to obey, through the wonderful majesty of his calling, they stop not to question his authority; for it is sufficiently impressible in its power. He makes known his will, and even Peter's native willfulness and heedless ways are overcome by his dear and resistless authority; nor has it ever been known that one could stay the sweet result of his call.

A. B. BREES.

St. Louis, Mich., Jan. 20, 1888.

DEAR ELDER DURAND:—Having read your letter in the SIGNS of Jan. 15, 1888, and being comforted thereby (upon the subject of the new birth), it being according to my experience, as I hope, I was at once impressed to write to you; for I well remember the dreadful perplexity and trouble that the theory that our carnal mind and nature is changed, when born again, caused me, until delivered by the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of the grace of God, which scattered to the wind that now-hated false way. The holy apostle's experience is the only standard that I can accept, as we find by sore experience that in us (that is, in our flesh, which includes the carnal mind and all that pertains to the first man Adam, of itself) dwells no good thing. For the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; for it is enmity itself against God, and we cannot make it otherwise, for the very good reason that God has not predestinated it so to be. But we come now to the glorious gift of the last Adam, which is a quickening Spirit, which is given to all the election of grace in due time, which is God's time, by which they are sealed to the day of redemption, when body, soul and spirit will be like Jesus Christ when he ascended into heaven, where he is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as Advocate with the Father for poor sinners that are born again. For when he ascended on high he sent the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, which we to this day both see and hear, to abide with his church for ever. And he gave gifts to men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them. He has never promised that those that are born again will never sin again; for the holy apostle John says, "I write unto you, little children, that ye sin not; but if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ." This

brings to view the only person in the Godhead, the man Christ Jesus, without whom the church would be destroyed in a moment. There is nobody else to save but lost sinners; and whatever their temptations and sins may be, the answer given to the apostle is good, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The idea that the doctrine of sovereign grace, which includes the doctrine of absolute predestination, will lead men to sin, is sickening; for the election of grace is held by the strong right hand of God almighty, and sin, men and devils can go no farther than his almighty will. And we that are in this tabernacle will continue to groan, being burdened with sin, for the reason that we have tasted something better, even the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. And this is the word which is nigh us that believe; because we are born again, and do not have to ascend into heaven to bring the Spirit of Christ down; for "no man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." This brings to view our personal Redeemer, the man Christ Jesus. But he has sent the Comforter to abide with his people forever. But alas! we think sometimes he is gone, and we sorrowfully feel after him. This is determined in the times before appointed, as the apostle preached at Athens, saying, "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." (Mark—*us*.) This "us" that the God of heaven has appointed to seek the Lord shall always find him, sooner or later, but never too late. But when the apostle spoke of the man Christ Jesus as risen from the dead, it was more than most of those great philosophers could stand. So it is now. There is always some testing point in the doctrine of God our Savior that marks the dividing line between him that knoweth God and him that knoweth him not. There it was the resurrection; now it seems to be the absolute sovereignty of God over sin, devils and men, as seen in the daring presumption to charge God foolishly as being the author of sin, because he has created the evil and the crooked serpent, which I understand to be Satan, who is the appointed ruler of the darkness of this world. And God has declared that the darkness and the light are both alike to him, which I understand to mean that they both serve his purpose. And who are we poor, sinful mortals that dare say, What doest thou? Dear Elder, I well remember when the doctrine of the new birth seemed the most foolish thing to me, but could be. I argued like the philosophers. But now it seems the most glorious truth, if possible, of all that the blazing fire of the Holy Spirit can dwell in poor, polluted hearts, and yet the sinner never consumed. But the great mystery is that we

Moses in the burning bush; and we, like Moses, have turned aside to see this great sight. But hark! my brother; "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet," is what the holy voice is saying to us. It cannot be comprehended by human reason. This is holy ground. The poor bush is not consumed, though the two mighty principles of good and evil are contending for the mastery. But the result is not in doubt with the almighty Savior. This is the individual experience; but it also typifies the whole church of God, from Abel down to the present day. But she will not be consumed, for our Advocate with the Father, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, has said that the gates of hell, which includes all the counsel and devices of men and devils combined, shall never prevail against his church. And in our personal experience, no matter how low we may be cast into the ditch of the filth and sin of the flesh, this holy Spirit comes like the wind, blowing where it listeth, and we hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born again. But the struggle goes on, as a consequence of having two principles within, and of being made partakers of the divine nature. You are right; nature is not changed. This the Scripture fully demonstrates. The Cretians were "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies;" and when they were born again and brought into the church, they had that same evil nature; else why was Titus especially admonished to rebuke them sharply, that they might be sound in the faith? And I, my dear brother, need not go any farther than self to find an evil beast. How often does it tear and rend; and but for the Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, I should be destroyed in a moment. I cannot live without the man Christ Jesus, who of God, I sometimes hope, is made unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. This is the only begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth, that the holy apostle John says keepeth himself, and sinneth not, neither doth the evil one touch him, he being the anointed of the Father. Consequently the evil one cannot touch the Spirit of Christ which is given us; else we are none of his. This is what I have been made to understand is the true God and eternal life, and is being born again, and as being chosen in Christ Jesus for this purpose before the world began. And if so, the blood of Jesus Christ will never fail to cleanse us from all sin, and present us faultless before the throne of his glory; to whom be glory, dominion, majesty and all power, both now and forever.

Please overlook mistakes, and this trespass on your time. Yours in the truth,

DAVID TITMUS.

JUSTUS, Pa., March 24, 1888.

AMY F. STOUT—DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I received your letter some time ago, and was happily surprised to hear from you; and though we are strangers in the flesh, I did feel as though I knew you when I read your most kind and comforting letter; but I thought if you knew more about me, perhaps you would not have written, for I am so wicked; yet it seems to brighten me up when I hear from the dear saints, as I feel they are. As you have asked me to write you my experience, I will try and do so, although I fear it will be in a very stumbling and blundering way. I know that unless enabled by a higher power than myself, I cannot write a word to interest you. I do not remember just how long ago, but I think it was nearly a year and a half (at least I was in my sixteenth year), when I commenced to be troubled about my condition. For a long while I did not know what made me feel so. I knew I felt different from what I ever had before. One night as I was going from school, during my last term, the words came to me, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." I thought they were in the Bible, so at my first opportunity I hunted until I found them. They were on my mind a great deal. I did not know their meaning, so I wanted to find out, but did not like to ask any one. I had heard many Arminians talk, so that I knew they believed in salvation by works. But I felt that I could do nothing to save me. I went to the Old School Baptist meetings more than any others, my parents being members of the church at Waverly, N. Y., my father being pastor of the same. But I never seemed to care much about the sermons. I could not understand even the explanation of the Scriptures. Sometimes I would fall asleep, and sleep until they commenced singing the last hymn, and often would forget what the text was. But after the words which I have quoted were so much impressed on my mind, I had a great desire to go and hear the truth preached and Jesus exalted. When I could do so without any one seeing me, I would get my Bible and read. I became more interested in that than I had been before. Sometimes I thought I understood what I was reading, and at other times it seemed I could get no light at all. I felt myself to be the worst and most wicked person on earth, all the time doing something wrong; and the more I tried to do right, the worse I seemed to get. I thought, Was there ever such a sinner as I? It worried me so that I did not know what to do with myself. Last July I left home and came here to live. The people were all the same as strangers to me, for I had only seen three or four of

our house over night. It seemed a task for me to leave, for I had never been away from home very much. Sometimes I thought I could not stand it to be away; but my father comes down here once in every month, which makes it pleasant for me. But it was not very long before I got acquainted with a number of the friends. I continued to be troubled in my mind for some time after coming here. The Old School Baptists have meeting twice a month—preaching on the first Sunday, and conference meeting on the third Sunday. I had not been to conference meetings very much until I came here, but I like to go and hear the friends talk. They tell my mind much better than I can. The first Saturday in September I went to meeting, and while there a strange feeling came over me. I could not think where I was for a moment. It seemed as if something was gone. I looked about to see what was the cause, and felt as though I heard some one say, "Your sins are forgiven." Everything looked much brighter and sweeter than before, and I felt very happy. I could not keep the tears of joy back. I wanted to tell some one how I felt, but was afraid to do so. I do not know why. I loved to be with those I believe to be the people of God, and longed to be one of their number, but felt too unworthy of a place among them. I had a desire to go to the church and tell them what I felt the Lord had done for poor, unworthy me. When my father came down in October, I tried to tell a few of my feelings to the church, but could say only a little. I was received, and baptized on Sunday by my father. Since then I have had a great many doubts and fears, often fearing I have been deceived, and have also deceived the church. Sometimes I think that perhaps I have never received a hope in the dear Savior; but still I cannot give up what little I have. It seems to cling to me. I feel as if I would like more evidence as to whether I am a child of God or not. The Scriptures say, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And if I know my heart at all, I know I love them. O that I might praise Jesus as I would like, live more to his honor and glory, and also be made to put my trust in him, and him alone, who doeth all things well, whether we can see it or not. I often feel to say,

"Can one that is a christian  
Have such a heart as mine?  
I fear that I have never felt  
The effects of love divine."

Well, dear sister, you told my mind better than I can myself. Remember me when it is well with you. Your very unworthy sister, if one at all,

PEARL B. VAIL.

DAVID CITY, Neb., April 28, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As I am kept at home

to-day by the gentle, pattering rain, that is gladdening the hearts of our farmers, I will try to pen some of the thoughts that are passing through my mind, and which I now place at your disposal, either to swell the contents of your waste-basket, or to find a humble place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Through the kindness of a very dear friend, I had been reading the SIGNS for fifteen months before I subscribed for it, and then, as well as now, I found much therein to encourage my weak faith and nourish my hungry, starving soul.

But alas! alas! I still find "a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
Can do helpless sinners good."

I have believed and loved the doctrine of election, so far as I was able to understand it, more than twenty-five years; for realizing from sad experience that it was utterly impossible for me to do anything by which to merit the favor of God, I was glad to feel that if I were ever saved at all it must be by great and sovereign grace.

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!

That saved a wretch like me;  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
Was blind, but now I see.

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,

And grace my fears reliev'd;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believ'd."

And it is more precious to me now than it has ever been before.

"Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come;

'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home"

"The Lord has promised good to me,  
His word my hope secures;  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures.

"Then when this flesh and heart shall fail,  
And mortal life shall cease,  
I shall possess within the veil  
A life of joy and peace.

"The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,  
The sun forbear to shine;  
But God, who called me here below,  
Will be forever mine."

But though I learned to believe and love the doctrine of election years ago, as I then understood it, I did not believe in the absolute predestination of ALL things, nor in eternal, vital union; and my ardent love for that denomination of which I was an honored member for nearly thirty years kept me from giving the subject that careful attention it so much deserves. Nor did I gain the consent of my stubborn will to do so, until I had been led through the deep waters of trouble and sorrow, the fiery furnace of affliction, and had been compelled to grope my way for weeks and months through worse than Egyptian darkness. Then being willing to do anything the Lord required of me, I began to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and to compare

its teachings with those of the Bible; and, to my great surprise, I found them, in my humble judgment, to coincide throughout. And as I found much in the SIGNS that gave some comfort to my bleeding heart, and calmed, to some extent, the troubled waters of my dark and dreary mind, I continued to read, until I now consider the SIGNS the very best religious paper I have ever seen. But though I enjoyed some occasional gleams of light during this, the darkest period of my life, they were short-lived, and soon passed away; and then the darkness seemed to become more dense than ever, till the third Sunday in last October, when the Sun of righteousness arose in my poor, sinful heart, and turned my darkness into brightest day, whilst I was attending the annual meeting of the Little Flock Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church in this county. Then I could joyfully sing with the psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed as the eagle's." Since that time I have passed through many dark seasons, but have enjoyed some "cheering beams of hope," for which I "thank God and take courage." I now love the doctrine of election more than ever, and believe in the absolute predestination of all things with my whole heart. Not that I would change the grace of God into lasciviousness, but because I now believe that, next to Jesus, the doctrine of election and predestination or salvation by grace as held and taught by Old School Baptists, forms the foundation-stone of the gospel. "For by grace ye are saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 7, 8. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 11. Yea, my dear brother, I now also believe in the eternal vital union of the Bridegroom and his bride, between Christ and his church; else how could our Father's children have been elected in Christ before the foundation of the world? With very slight exceptions I heartily indorse and greatly enjoy everything I find in the SIGNS.

May the Lord bless and comfort you in all your work and labor of love. Please pray that I, your most unworthy brother, if one at all, may be enabled to live the life of the righteous, and that my last end may be like his. Please do with this just as you may think best.

J. T. SKINNER.

CRAMER, Ill., Nov. 23, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I feel constrained this evening, after

having read Elder Chick's communication on the predestination of all things, to write a few lines to my dear brethren and sisters, readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel to hope that none who have written upon the subject of predestination will manifest the spirit of Saul to David, when it was said that Saul had slain his thousands, but David his tens of thousands. While I have been interested in all their writings, yet Elder Chick has written so plainly, and has entered my feelings and experience so sweetly, I want to ask every reader of the SIGNS to read it carefully, and reread it. And I would say to such as have been bewitched, Try it by the word of God and your own experience; and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Nothing but truth will stand. "Let God be true, and every man a liar." Remember the words of the apostle, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed." And, "O man, who art thou that replest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" If that is not the truth which our dear brother Chick wrote in such a child-like manner that a poor, ignorant one like me could receive it in my heart, then I am none of you. I do feel this evening like praising God that there is yet a remnant that have not bowed to the image of Baal. It was but a few years ago that I first heard any one attempt to limit God's predestination. Who hath required this at our hands, to set bounds and limit the eternal God? Dear brethren, do not be afraid that you will make God the author of sin, for we have no power to do so; for we are the poor, hell-deserving sinner, and where shall we flee from his presence? He is just and holy, and will do as seemeth good in his sight.

My dear kindred, if indeed I have any reason to hope that we are one in Christ, I have many sore trials to pass through; yet there are some bright spots in my sojourn. I had the pleasure this fall of visiting several associations in Illinois, when I seemed to enjoy the gospel as proclaimed by the servants of our God. At one of the associations I met Elders Vail and Bundy, of New York state. Their theme was Christ and him crucified, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. The preaching was all the one glorious theme. I also made a visit east, attended the yearly meeting at Rock Spring, Pa., and had the privilege of hearing Elders Rittenhouse and Staton. After visiting friends there, I went to visit a brother in the bounds of the Juniata Association, of Pennsylvania, and heard Elders White and Corder preach, which I enjoyed, and while listening to them I felt to say, Their God is my God. I did not have to try to love them or their doctrine, for I could not help loving them. I

met old Elder Rose, stopped one night with him, and enjoyed his company very much. I could not help loving the dear old brother, though I had been prejudiced against him. I enjoyed myself well among the dear brethren and friends. Now that I have returned home, and am separated from those spiritual enjoyments, I am low down in the valley, darkness has overshadowed me, and something seems to say, You are a poor, defuded creature. How little I have retained of the glorious feast. It seems to be all gone, has fallen on a rock, or among thorns, and for want of good ground it perished. It seems that I am a mystery to myself. Surely there never was one so unworthy of a name among the children of God. O if I could only know that I am an Israelite indeed. But I am so vile and sinful, I fear I shall one day fall. Pray for me. If you feel to give any part of this a place in the SIGNS, all right; and if not, all will be right. May the Lord bless you, is my prayer.

E. D. VARNES.

NEW CASTLE, Ind., May 30, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having read the SIGNS of June 1, 1888, I wish to make special mention of three articles in it, namely, Elder Durand's, the editorial on the new birth, by Elder G. Beebe, and the Circular Letter of the Baltimore Association, as especially interesting and important at this time, as clearly and pointedly showing who is saved, as well as how saved and by whom. Substantially the same gospel truth concerning the salvation of dying sinners pervades those three articles; and I am thankful that they appear together, as sanctioning the teaching of Christ, that he came to call sinners to repentance, and the declaration of the angel, that Jesus shall save his people from their sins. Brother Durand speaks of almost all the brethren in the east as believing this precious doctrine, as thus set forth; and I am well assured that almost all the Primitive Baptists of the west also believe it. Let me invite special notice to the point in dear old brother Beebe's editorial, and in the Circular, showing how dead sinners are made alive; that is, by the life-giving power and work of the Holy Spirit. The Circular says, "Seeing this truth plainly, we shall see also that no means nor instrumentalities are needed nor can possibly be used in this giving of life to the dead. It is simply, he that hath the Son of God: he that hath not the Son of God. If Jesus is with you, you have life; if Jesus is not with you, there is no life in you." Nothing could be truer than this; and it is just what our brethren in the west truly believe, and also preach, as all know who know the truth. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth," says Jesus; therefore it is not the preacher nor the preaching. And though one may be under the sound of preaching when quickened, yet the

truth is the same, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." None believe and preach this more sincerely and earnestly than our beloved ministry here, though they have been reported as Means Baptists. But, while it is the Spirit that quickeneth, it is also as equally true that it is the chosen sinner, for whom Christ died, that is quickened and born again; and this our brethren here believe and preach, as taught in those articles in the SIGNS. It seems strange that any, who have been quickened, and felt the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and desire salvation and holiness, would deny that they themselves have been born again; for, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is the clear and simple doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of the apostles, and of the church of Christ. This divine and supernatural work is wrought in us by the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and by it we receive the life of Adam by our first birth; and every one thus born again is no less a child of God than a child of Adam, being as really one with Jesus the Son of God in his life, as also one with Adam the creature of God in his life. And so this man, born again, is himself both a creature and a son of God, both a dying sinner and a living saint. His hope is in Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life. In this good hope yours,

D. BARTLEY.

WORTHINGTON, Minn., Jan. 17, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please find inclosed two dollars for my subscription. As I have to write to you, I feel that I would like to say to you that I hope the SIGNS OF THE TIMES will always publish the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. It is something I love, if I know what love is; but there are times when I think I never knew love, and I feel so cast down that my heart sinks in me and I tremble. My whole frame shakes when I watch my thoughts and see how they wander from the God I say I love. These things make me feel daily, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I can freely say with Paul, "I die daily," because of unbelief. Doubts and fears assail me in this way: You are here all alone, no one near you that believes like you. It seems to be plain that you are not a child of God, or he would never leave you here alone. Then come thoughts like this, You say you love the brethren; then why are you so far away? Is it not the lust of the flesh, after this world's goods, that brought you here, so far from any place of worship? These things and many others torment the mind. But when I feel these things, there seems to be a still, small voice down in the heart that says, It is not within man to guide his steps and go wheresoever he pleases; for I feel to bear witness to these things by bitter experience; that is, bitter

to nature; for I know that all power is given unto Jesus in heaven and on earth. The word "all" means all: little things, as well as great, are included. So my ways must be among the small things. Jesus knew the end from the beginning. When I read these things, my mind reflects back. I sometimes feel to say that every trouble brings a blessing, and all is well, because the wisdom of the Lord Jesus seems to shine upon it all; and there seems to be something in me that says, "Peace, be still." I then feel thankful to the Lord that he shows and teaches me these things according to his will, and not mine. I feel to ask him to guide, guard and direct me, and all his loved ones, according to his will.

I often feel that I would love to see the people in Maryland, at Fishing Creek, where I was baptized. It would seem sweet to me to meet them once more; but it has pleased God to place me here in the west, and them in the east; but my mind and memory go to them in love and tender feelings, and to all of the same faith.

Dear brethren Beebe, there is one thing that besets me, which is, I feel that I would love the dear Redeemer more than I do, but cannot. It seems as though evil is always present with me. Is it so with you?

When you have read this you will see what a poor, wretched, wandering mind mine is; also, how short I come of knowing the language of Canaan. When I look at my ignorance, and know the wisdom of the children of God, then I feel abased, and afraid to write; but knowing that the Lord has given you knowledge and understanding so as to be merciful to the ignorant, I will submit this to your judgment, to do with as the Lord may direct your will.

I remain your unworthy friend,

HENRY JAMES.

CANTON, Tex., Dec. 16, 1887.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I was raised by Primitive Baptist parents, and have been used to hearing the predestinarian doctrine preached and argued pro and con all my life, in Alabama, Louisiana and Texas; but I never until about two years ago heard it said that Adam was made able to stand, but liable to fall. One Elder in passing through this section, from Georgia to western Texas, two years ago last May, preached that doctrine. It was new to me then, and I could not receive it, neither do I now believe it.

To my mind (though I know it is weak) it unsettles the whole plan of salvation, and leaves everything to chance and the volition of man's own will.

How could the prophets foretell future events if there was no fixed purpose in the economy and works and laws of God? In him, we are informed, there is no variableness or shadow of turning. The beginning and the end, and every intermediate

step, were all present with him in the beginning. Suppose that Adam had refused to partake of the forbidden fruit, and had still remained in the state in which he was created, can any one say what the result would have been? If there was any contingency or uncertainty about the fall of Adam, why was it necessary for a redemption covenant before time began or man was created?

Will finite minds undertake to limit God's predestination, and say what he permits, and what he decrees, and how far he can exercise his prerogative, without laying himself liable to the charge of injustice? Men are too prone to set up a standard of their own to try the great Creator of heaven and earth and all their fullness by; and should any of his revealed will and word come in conflict with any of their "standards" or "think so," they set it aside as unjust and unreasonable. And it seems to me that that accounts for many different denominations and beliefs.

Brother J. H. Yeoman has spoken my sentiments through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES in No. 23, Dec. 1, 1887. Man was "made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope;" thus showing that man is a subject of God's overruling government. I would like to hear from some or all of our able correspondents on that subject, not by way of criticism, but in brotherly love, striving for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Yours in love to all the brotherhood,

E. J. PARSONS.

COVINGTON, Ga., Jan. 21, 1888.

BELOVED BRETHREN EDITORS:— I would love so much, after finishing the business part of my letter, to write you some word of encouragement in regard to the great work in the labor of love you are engaged in for the household of faith, in that of the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have been almost a constant reader for nearly forty years, and a subscriber for almost as long; and if there has been any variation in all those years, by you or your father, I have not been able to find it out. Believing it has been published hitherto in the interest of the cause of the Baptists of the Primitive order, I feel constrained for one, though feeble it may be, to help, and say to the brethren everywhere, Let us stand fast in the faith, continuing to quit yourselves like men; for our God has promised to be with us, even unto the end of the world. What then if we do have to suffer? Did not our blessed Savior suffer? If we suffer for his sake, we ought to rejoice for being counted worthy. We are to be made meet for the Master's use, and I can see no better way for this to be brought about than for us to be tried as gold is tried, and refined as silver is refined; and the furnace is not only burning now, that

the cross may be consumed, but it has been burning ever since the early age of the world. It is the Lord's furnace; he heats it and controls the heat, so the sons of Jacob are not consumed, but come forth as gold. Blessed truth indeed, that the Lord reigns. He has declared, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass," not may; and "as I have purposed, so shall it stand fast." He was able to declare the end (the end of time and all timely things) in the beginning. I cannot understand how the poor, little child of God can feel secure, unless he believes that his Father has the full control of all things, even of Satan too, so that not a shaft of his can hit until our God sees fit. O what a resting place, brethren, we have in our Father's kingdom. Here is room enough for all the troubled ones. Safe refuge this. We can feel sometimes to indorse the poet,

"My spirit looks to God alone,  
My rock and refuge is his throne;  
In all my fears and all my straits,  
My soul on his salvation waits."

I did not commence this to write at length, but to drop a word of encouragement to you, and if you thought to be in place, to the dear brethren, to still pursue the "good old way," continuing to enrich the columns of our old family paper as heretofore, with the precious things of the gospel of peace.

Yours in hope,

WM. ADAMS.

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EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

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THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST.

It is written in the Scriptures that "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."—Rev. xix. 10. Not only is all the sacred volume of the Bible filled with this infallible testimony, but that same fact is confirmed by the existence of the things that are made. Even to the natural reason of intelligent creatures it is evident that the material universe is not the production of mere chance. Neither is it consistent with natural wisdom to hold that the events which transpire in time are the result of any uncertain purpose. While the mind of man is capable of receiving this much of the knowledge of the existence of a Creator, it is utterly impossible that man should by reason attain to the knowledge of God. In the state of innocence in which the first man was created he could not know God; for Jesus says, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."—John xvii. 3. If Adam had possessed this knowledge it would have been impossible that he should have fallen under the power of death through the sting of sin. In all that is revealed of the great "mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," is shown the utter impossibility of any created intelligence attaining any true knowledge of divine things by searching the resources of natural understanding. Our Lord was definitely pointed out in all the types and legal requirements of the old covenant dispensation, and to him give all the prophets witness; yet they who were familiar with the letter of the law could not see in Jesus the fulfillment of all those things which are therein written. His messenger John said, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18. This declaration is that revelation of the Spirit of truth by which alone any sinner is ever brought to the knowledge of God, which is eternal life. It is received only by the hearing of the voice of the Son of God which gives life to the dead. Therefore, every one who hears this word is fully qualified to bear witness to the truth of the omnipotence of every command which Jesus speaks. This is an example of that which Jesus said, "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me."—John x. 25.

It is only as the inspired Scriptures are understood as the record which God has given of his Son that they can be seen as one harmonious

word of truth. As the earth would be wrapped in perpetual night without the light of the natural sun, so the failure to see Jesus as the essential light of all inspired writings, would leave the whole record without meaning and inconsistent with itself. Without that life which was in him, and was the light of men, it is impossible that the mystery of godliness should be understood by all the study which may be expended upon the letter of the written word. The reason given for this by our Lord himself is that the Father has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes; and in this will of the Father Jesus himself agrees, saying, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt. xi. 25, 26. From this fact it is evident that our God did not design that even his servants, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, should be able to show the truth with the power to make it acceptable to the natural mind of man. Much less are we justified in understanding that the sovereign Ruler of the universe has need of testimony to justify himself in the sight of his creature man, whom he made of the dust which he created. Hence, we do not understand that it is the object of the revelation given by the prophets and apostles to attest the truth of his own revealed words. Nor yet can we understand the object of the Scriptures to be to prove that Jesus is the divine Savior of sinners. This could bring no personal assurance to comfort the conscious sinner; for he does indeed believe that Jesus is the Savior when he cannot yet see any ground to hope that he is a partaker of that salvation. It is not because of the written evidence found in the Bible that his people are made to trust in Jesus as their Savior. That testimony is indeed very gloriously applied to their comfort and encouragement when the Spirit takes of the things of Jesus and shows it unto them in their times of darkness and trial; but when they first hope in the salvation which is in Christ it is not the result of anything which they have read, or heard from the tongue of any created being. It is the Spirit alone that possesses quickening power to give life to the dead sinner. None but Jesus can speak words which are spirit and life. His word comes without speech or language of mortals, and is not heard by the natural ear, but it is spirit and life. Every one who hears that voice is at once a living soul. The sinner who has thus been translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of the dear Son of God, is thereby qualified to bear witness that Jesus is indeed the Christ of God. This testimony rests not on anything which he has learned from reading or hearing others. Each one is made a personal witness of the infinite power of that grace which was manifested in his own

salvation. It is in this sense that the Lord says unto his people, "I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed when there was no strange god among you; therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God."—Isa. xliii. 12. In the case of each one who is led to hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, the work is in the secret thoughts of the heart, without the intervention of any created being between the conscious sinner and his God. For this cause every believer hath the witness in himself.—1 John v. 10.

As the qualification of these witnesses is an individual matter in which no creature can come between the subject of divine teaching and his God, so the assurance of their testimony is an individual benefit, in which they are not left to depend upon the word of any man, not even upon the inspired record of the Scriptures. Their knowledge of the truth is not received through the medium of natural reason, but is given to them by direct revelation, and received by the spiritual power of faith, which is itself the gift of God. To the natural mind they can present no evidence to establish the truth which they have thus been made to know, yet so deeply is it graven in their very existence that in opposition to the decision of their own reason they know the truth.

In this knowledge they are established so perfectly that they cannot give it up. Even when under the power of temptation they are ready to deny all their evidences of hope in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, there is still a deep and abiding consciousness that they have been taught of God things beyond the power of reason to comprehend or know. They may even feel that they have been deceived in the whole matter of their hope, yet they cannot deny the assurance which still remains in their hearts, causing them to cry unto God out of the depths of their perplexity. This cry is itself the evidence of their confidence which looks to that God from whom alone they can hope for deliverance. They do in spirit and in truth worship God in thus calling upon him in the day of their trouble; and he hears their cry and saves them out of their distresses. It is said of the woman of Canaan that she "worshipped" Jesus, "saying, Lord, help me."—Matt. xv. 25. In this worship the helpless suppliant is not conscious that the very necessity which compels the prayer is needful to make that prayer acceptable as the only worship which is acknowledged and answered by that God who is a Spirit, and whose worship must be in spirit and in truth.—John iv. 24. All such petitions as are based upon claims of merit in the petitioner, fail to meet this divine requirement, and are consequently rejected of God. In no other way can any created being come unto the Father but by that new and living way which is reveal-

ed in Jesus Christ. Therefore every display of divine grace in the deliverance of a sinner from his sins, and in preserving those who call upon him in the day of trouble, distinctly presents the testimony of Jesus as the triumphant Redeemer.

In the divine glory which Jesus had with the Father before the world was, there was neither need nor room for any testimony to his eternal Deity. It is only in his unity with his body, the church of which he is the living Head, that his revealed glory is attested by the witness of all the recipients of his grace in the remission of sin. Every poor and needy sinner who calls for grace to deliver him from his guilt, does in that prayer bear testimony to the truth that there is salvation alone in the name of the Lord Jesus. Hence, the very consciousness of just condemnation under which they groan, is the essential qualification by which they are enabled to bear this true testimony of Jesus Christ. This is not the way which would seem right to natural reason, but it is the way in which God reveals himself to all his chosen witnesses. In all their tribulations in the world the saints are practically qualified to bear witness to the power of their glorified Redeemer by continual experience of their entire dependence upon his omnipotent arm for deliverance out of conflicts and trials which beset them on every hand. In no other way could they be prepared to testify that Jesus is indeed the Savior whom God has anointed with his own holy Spirit, and that he is able to save his people from their sins. To such as have been experimentally brought to know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses them from all sin, there is nothing uncertain in the fact that he is justly entitled to that name, with all its wonderful significance as defined by the heavenly messenger who announced his birth.—Matt. i. 21. Thus they are fully prepared to testify that Jesus is their Savior. In this certainty rests all their comfort in the belief of the truth.

The people who have the testimony of Jesus Christ are they whom the grace of God has called out from the world of mankind, and in whom are found the divinely declared marks of his chosen people. They are chosen to be partakers of the fellowship of his sufferings, by which they are sealed as his disciples and heirs of that incorruptible inheritance in glory which is given them in him. They certainly cannot follow him in any other way but that in which he has led. Hence Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—Matt. xvi. 24. There is no easy road in which the disciples of Christ may walk in peace with a sinful world and in harmony with their own carnal mind. The friendship of the world must ever remain, as it ever has been, "enmity with God." This cross

must be borne by every disciple of Jesus. But there is ample provision in the abundant grace of our Lord for the support of all those who are called to encounter this severe opposition from the world and the devil, in addition to the ever present evil of their own indwelling corruption. When the dear apostle besought the Lord for relief from this great conflict, he was comforted with the assurance, "My grace is sufficient; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."—2 Cor. xii. 9. When they are in possession of sufficient strength to feel confident that they are in no danger, then they are not manifesting that they have the testimony of Jesus Christ; but when they are under the necessity of crying, "Lord, save; I perish;" then the power of Christ resting upon them is the testimony of Jesus in their experience, which cannot be counterfeited nor obliterated by any devices of the adversary. Since this testimony is a revelation of the Spirit of Christ, it cannot be received by the natural mind of the saint to whose faith it is shown; therefore reason can see no evidence to support the hope of the conscious sinner whose only trust is in the testimony of Jesus Christ as written by the Spirit in his heart. So long as they remain in the body of this death they who are led by the Spirit of God will not be free from the conflict between their natural mind and the mind of Christ which dwells in them. For this cause it is appointed unto them that they must walk by faith, and not by sight.

The ever present witness by which the saints are assured of their interest in the redemption which is through the blood of Jesus, is not found in the remembrance of past experience alone. Even the apostle to whom it was given to behold the glorious transfiguration of the Lord upon the mount, could not refer to that manifestation with so much assurance as to that "more sure word of prophecy" to which he says they do well to take heed who have received like precious faith with the inspired apostles. The saints are exhorted to "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." This requires them to be ever looking forward in their race, while natural reason seeks support in looking backward at past experience for evidence of the reality of their calling and election of God. This is the difference between resting implicitly upon the word of the Lord and reposing confidence in the flesh. All who are chosen of God to "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," must learn by personal experience that they can find no support from any of the powers of their nature in holding that testimony. They must receive this truth through much tribulation, for it is only in this way that they can be divested of reliance upon the support of their

natural mind. When any one would volunteer as a witness of the truth without having been brought by the way of "much tribulation" into the knowledge of its living power, the result will always be as it was with the rich young man who volunteered to follow Jesus, who was sad at the saying of the Lord, and went away grieved, "for he had great possessions."—Mark x. 22. While it is invariably taught to every one who is led by the Spirit of God that no powers of their own could attain that knowledge which has been revealed in them, it is yet needful that they should be constantly reminded of that truth throughout their whole sojourn here on earth. Every time they are made to see their own utter weakness and total destitution of righteousness in themselves, they have renewed evidence that Jesus Christ is the embodiment of all their strength, as well as their life. While it is the first revelation given to them that without Jesus they can do nothing, it requires all their subsequent experience of affliction and trials to teach them that truth. Even the imprisoned John sent his disciples to ask of Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" So the question often arises in the mind of the saints whether that glorious word upon which they were caused to hope, was indeed the word of their Redeemer. Past experience cannot satisfy this important inquiry. They must have that testimony of Jesus which abides in them and is ever present with them. In accordance with the parting promise of our Lord as given to his disciples, unto every one who is called by his grace he sends the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, who shall abide with and in each of them, bearing that witness of the finished work of salvation, which is the infallible testimony of Jesus, in which he is revealed as the Savior anointed of God.

#### THE NEW BIRTH.

WE have of late received so many complaints from the brethren that too much space has been taken in the SIGNS in discussion on the subject of the new birth, that we think it advisable to discontinue it for the present. It is evident that those of opposite views cannot be reconciled to each other by pursuing the argument. There have been volumes written on the subject in former years, and those agreeing with us cannot be further convinced; therefore we feel that our columns can be filled with matter that will be of more general benefit and interest to our readers. We have now in our office numerous articles on this subject from beloved and gifted brethren, and when they see this notice they will know why they are not published.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Warwick Association of Old School Baptist churches, in session with our sister church at Warwick, June 6th, 7th and 8th, to the churches in our fellowship, and whose messengers we are, sends love in the Lord.*

DEARLY BELOVED:—In addressing you at this time we would not be moved simply by the force of that custom which has prevailed in the past, by which it is expected that at every meeting a Circular shall be prepared for publication in our Minutes. If no more important reason than this can be found for our writing, it would be better to dispense with such a mere empty formality. But there is both precept and example in the inspired rule of our Lord, by which they that fear the Lord are authorized to speak by tongue and pen for the encouragement and exhortation of one another while passing through this land of gloom, where the shadow of death darkens all their way. In such a pilgrimage we are prepared to fully appreciate the companionship of those who are kindred in spirit, and partakers of the same conflicts and tribulations which we are called to encounter. It is recorded that when darkness had overspread the typical nation of Israel, so that they said, "It is vain to serve God, even then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name."—Mal. iii. 16. While the conversation of the saints may be expressive of sadness, and they may feel that all is darkness about their pathway, it is one peculiar mark of the disciples of Jesus, that they are comforted and encouraged by nothing more than by the mournful complaints of those whose grief is caused by their bondage under sin. Such mourners evidently do "hunger and thirst after righteousness," and are blessed by the Lord Jesus, who is the supreme Judge of quick and dead. Every one who has the fellowship of this mourning, is led by the Spirit of God, and all such are the sons of God. This is the test given by inspiration of God, and it must be infallible. Therefore, this assurance of blessedness belongs to every one who mourns in conscious destitution of righteousness.

While these blessed mourners are sealed by their very grief as the chosen objects of eternal love and grace, it is given to them to endure in this temporal world the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, in which they have the earnest of their unity with him in his righteousness and glory. To all the subjects of this blessing his word is addressed, saying, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." In the pathway of obedience they experience the answer of a good conscience toward God, which cannot be realized in disobedience. This is true not only of

the first acknowledgment of faith in Christ Jesus by following him in baptism, but with equal force it applies to every injunction which he has given to his followers, whether by his own immediate word or by the decision of his inspired apostles. Every direction thus given must perfectly harmonize with the whole word of inspiration. Under the law of liberty which is written in the hearts of his people by the Spirit of Christ, they are not called to render unwilling service to any burdensome requirements. God himself works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, so that every duty is their highest privilege, and every privilege is a duty. Thus they are free to all righteousness, while it is their most bitter grief to disobey the holy commandment of their Lord. But in this kingdom of our Lord obedience does not consist in mere formal observance of ceremonies; the law being spiritual, it can be obeyed only in spirit and in truth. Compliance with the letter of the law of Christ without the spirit of obedience, can amount to nothing more than the mockery of obedience, since our Lord judges the secret thoughts of the heart. But every one who is spiritual, has the desire to walk in obedience to the holy commandment, not for the sake of attaining a reward in a future world of glory, but because they love holiness by the working in them of the holy Spirit of Christ. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Romans viii. 9. This Spirit never works in opposition to the direction given in the Scriptures for the admonition of the saints. Every suggestion must be tried by this only standard, and if it will not bear this test it certainly comes from that antichrist of which we are admonished to beware.—1 John iv. 1-6. It is always safe to obey every direction of our Lord when it is applied as addressed to us; and this application always manifests in those to whom it comes such a desire to follow Jesus that the Scripture is fulfilled in them, as it is written by David, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."—Psalm cx. 3. To all who have that desire wrought in them the privilege which they desire most assuredly belongs. They will always find the way of transgression hard, while in obeying the word of the Lord they will receive in their present experience the recompense of the reward of the approval of the law of Christ, which to all who love him is above all price.

The circumstances surrounding the church of Christ at this time are not less trying than they have been in every age since the church was organized at Jerusalem. We may well consider the question whether they who were outlawed and imprisoned for their confession of the faith of Jesus were not rather to be envied than pitied by us who have been called to endure no such tribu-

lation. They were indeed surrounded by bloody persecutors, and their names were cast out as evil; but they were by their very trials delivered from the terrible experience of that death which results to the saints who live after the flesh.—Romans viii. 13. In suffering the loss of all things they were relieved from the doubt of their real interest in the truth of the gospel, which often perplexes those who have not been thus tried. But there are indications that the time is not distant when persecution will again try the genuineness and power of that faith which is in us. The perilous times which the Spirit expressly foretells, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving" (1 Tim. iv. 1-4), are certainly now developed even in the church of the living God. The prevalence of such evils among carnal men is not confined to any age or time. It is when these things are seen in the organized and visible church of Christ that the saints are admonished of their serious import. When they are seen it is an indication that "the latter times" have come, so far as the continuance of the visible church in that region and time is concerned. This has been fulfilled in all the sections where the gospel church existed in the apostolic time. Not a semblance of true christianity exists in all those countries. Even before the apostles fell asleep, in some of the churches these indications of antichrist were reproved by them. This is recorded for our instruction and admonition. When these things are seen we are not to conclude that the Lord has been defeated in his purpose of grace. It is but the very event which the Spirit expressly declared by Paul. Instead of discouraging the saints, these things should rather confirm their confidence that even these very gloomy and adverse developments which are seen by the natural mind, are all contributing to the accomplishment of the exceeding great and precious promises which are given unto us by the amazing grace of our Lord. While to reason it seems that our hope is perished in disappointment, and unbelief may suggest that we have trusted in the Lord in vain, faith sees in these very trials of iniquity the clearest evidence that our God is still causing the mouth of man to praise him, and we therefore continue in the confidence of the remainder of that written promise. Resting in the immutability of

our almighty Redeemer, we may well commit the keeping of our souls unto God, as unto a faithful Creator. May we be kept by the power of his grace, and with all them that are called according to his purpose, may we ever be found endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.  
BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

*The Chemung Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Old School Baptist Church at Cherry Flats, Tioga Co., Pa., June 13th, 14th and 15th, 1888, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting of love and fellowship in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

It has been our custom for many years to write a Circular Letter, in which we as an association desire to set forth some of the principal points of the glorious and soul-comforting doctrine of God's sovereign power and grace in the salvation of his own chosen people, whom he has ordained unto glory. We do well to remember that the same wisdom and power that ordained some of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam unto glory, left under condemnation all that are eternally lost. The very fact that he is sovereign, and all that are saved are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, substantiates this position. He declares that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. He also has declared "The end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." We cannot limit God in predestination. We know nothing about permissive decrees. We think them about as consistent as free agency. We as an association heartily indorse the doctrine of God's predestination, as set forth by the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also in withdrawing fellowship from those that rail against the truth. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Another point of doctrine that we continue to contend for is the spiritual standing of the church of God in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from all eternity. The apostle in addressing the saints, says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." As the whole natural family had life given them in Adam, as progenitor, head and representative: even so the whole church of God had eternal life given them in Christ, as progenitor, head and representative. Proof: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." As

God is eternal, the church was just as complete with him before the world, with all created things, were made, as it ever can or will be; but the Scriptures plainly teach that the glorious work of salvation is made manifest in the experience of the chosen vessels of mercy. While here in this time state, while in the flesh, sinners are quickened; as the apostle declares, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." They are also delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The Savior said to saved sinners, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." The apostle, in addressing himself to sinners saved by grace, says, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Who are called out of darkness? Eternal spirits, or children? No; but Paul, the chief of sinners, with all that are born of God, of that incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Every promise is for this character. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. How can these precious promises be applied to eternal children, and comfort sinners saved by grace? They cannot be; and we do feel to praise and adore the great name of our God for his goodness and mercy in revealing the things of his kingdom to those that were once dead, but now are made alive; once blind, but now see. May the God of all grace comfort, establish and build you up in your most holy faith, is our prayer for Jesus' sake. If the doctrine that is presented in this epistle is not the truth, we are without hope and without God in the world.

Dear brethren, in conclusion we would say, Suffer a word of exhortation. What is our condition as a church? What are we doing as individual members? Are we all at our post, doing our duty as faithful christians, forsaking not the assembling of ourselves together, bearing one another's burden, and so fulfilling the law of Christ? Or are the perishing things of this world uppermost in our minds, so much so that we have become dead to the welfare of Zion, and can find time to meet with her only often enough to hold the name Old School Baptist? How would this Scripture apply to such a one, or to a church, that only meets for worship three or four times in a year? Let us eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called Old School Baptists, to take away our reproach.

This Scripture is generally applied to Arminian Baptists, but we think that in many instances it can be applied a little nearer home. Dear brethren, let us consider these things well, examine ourselves, and see whether we are remiss in duty. Do we put forth our every effort to meet with those we profess to love? Do we minister to the comfort of the saints with the ability and with the things which God has blessed us with? Have we any poor brethren or sisters among us that need assistance? Let us assist them. A society that would allow a brother or sister to go to the poor or county house, if they could prevent it, is not worthy the name of Old School Baptist. A word in regard to ministers of the gospel. Some have said, "Keep your minister poor, and he will be a good one." The command is, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn."—1 Cor. ix. 9. It is the bounden duty of a church to minister to the necessities of her pastor, according as God has blessed them; and a church that is able, and will not do this, is not worthy the gift, and the judgments of God will sooner or later be visited upon such a body. God is not mocked. What a man or church soweth, that shall they reap. Plain, naked facts, to which we do well to take heed.

D. M. VAIL, Mod.  
E. J. ENGLISH, Clerk.

#### CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Southampton Church, to the associations, corresponding meetings and churches with which she corresponds, sends christian love and salutation.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—We have great reason for gratitude to him who hath preserved us in the love and fellowship of the gospel, and brought us together in an association to receive your correspondence and messengers, who have declared unto us your steadfastness in the faith of the God of will, purpose and power, and in contending for that salvation revealed to the elect subjects of his grace, and made manifest in translating them from the power of darkness into the marvelous light of the truth, that they may henceforth walk in newness of life and hope of eternal rest beyond this vale of sorrow.

The churches composing our association are dwelling in love, and resting upon the oath and promise of him who declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

A number of our brethren have been called from this mortal state of existence to the realities of an eternal one, and we trust it was to mansions of rest with God and the Lamb.

Death depletes our numbers, and we sensibly feel the loss of precious brethren; but we know that the church of Christ is a perfect num-

ber, and the eye of him who never slumbers nor sleeps is over all his saints, and he will bring them in his time to their respective places amongst their brethren.

Our session has been one of comfort to those who love the Lord, and that peace and harmony that should characterize the assemblies of the saints has been maintained throughout the meeting. Our pure minds have been stirred up, and we have ascribed glory and honor to the God of our salvation, for his manifest presence with us.

Our next session is appointed to be held with the First Hopewell Church, Mercer County, New Jersey, commencing on Wednesday before the first Sunday in June, 1889, at ten o'clock a. m., when we hope to receive your correspondence and messengers in the love and fellowship of the saints.

SILAS H. DURAND, Mod.  
CYRUS RISLER, Clerk.

*The Warwick Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with the church at Warwick, Orange Co., N. Y., June 6th, 7th and 8th, 1888, to our sister associations with whom we are in correspondence, greeting.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—Through the kind providence of our loving God, we have once more been permitted to meet in our annual association. Our meeting has been one of peace and harmony, and we feel that we can say, The Lord has been with us. Your messengers have come unto us in the fullness of the gospel, and we have been richly fed while listening to their preaching.

While we cannot report any very large gatherings among our churches, yet we are at peace, and remain firm in the doctrine once delivered to the saints.

We have appointed to hold our next session with the church at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., to begin on Wednesday before the second Sunday in June, 1889, where we hope to receive a goodly number of your messengers.

WM. L. BEEBE, Mod.  
BENTON JENKINS, Clerk.

*The messengers composing the Chemung Association, to the associations and churches with whom she corresponds, sends christian love and salutation.*

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE FAITH OF OUR LORD:—Once more we have enjoyed the privilege of meeting together in the capacity of an association. We have listened to the joyful sound of salvation by grace, as proclaimed by several able ministers of our faith and order. Each has spoken with power, to the comfort and upbuilding of Zion. We hope our messengers to you will be received in the spirit of charity and brotherly love that we feel toward you. We desire a continuance of your correspondence and fellowship.

The next session of our Association is appointed to be held with the church at Vaughan Hill, Bradford Co., Pa., in June, 1889.

D. M. VAIL, Mod.  
E. J. ENGLISH, Clerk.

#### MARRIAGES.

ON June 19, 1888, at Rutherford, N. J., by Elder Benton Jenkins, Mr. Sidney Bell, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Miss Lizzie, daughter of Wm. P. Haviland, of Rutherford, Bergen Co., N. J.

By the same, on June 20, 1888, at the residence of the bride's parents, 46 Colden Street, Newburgh, N. Y., Mr. Matthew R. Henry, of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Miss Addie L., daughter of Mr. George T. Eggleston.

ON June 13, 1888, by Elder P. G. Lester, at the residence of the bride's parents, Mr. W. S. Swearingen, of St. Joe, Ill., and Miss Lucy Thomas, of Lawrenceburgh, Ky.

MAY 25, 1888, at the residence of the bride, in Washington, D. C., by Elder Wm. M. Smott, Mr. Wm. E. Stockett and Miss Annie M. Hodgson, both of Washington.

JUNE 10, 1888, by the same, at the residence of Mr. James Beach, Prince Wm. Co., Va., Mr. Robert W. Beach and Miss Margarette A. Mills, both of Prince Wm. Co., Va.

#### OBITUARY NOTICES.

"TURN thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged; O bring thou me out of my distresses."

When any that are regarded as the wise and noble of this world take their departure for some other country, clime, or place of abiding, it is often chronicled by those who are left behind as a remarkable event, their praises are spoken, and testimonials are offered concerning them. But the children of Zion, who are an "afflicted and poor people," and not "reckoned among the nations" of the earth, and therefore not counted among the wise and noble thereof, are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth," and when any of them pass from one country to another, it is not much noted by those wise and noble ones, or their admirers; neither is their departure from the scenes of earth and shores of time a matter of any great concern. But to their kindred in Christ, their companions in tribulation, their partners in toils and sorrows, such a change is of great and abiding interest. The poor of this world are the riches of the Lord, and the lowly of this world are the glory of our God, who hath saved them and called them, and made them his praise and his testimonial. It is to chronicle the departure of one of these that is the object of this writing. Another one of the "poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which God hath promised to them that love him," has gone from time to his eternal home.

Our brother, **William Henry Ferguson**, of Odessa, Lafayette Co., Mo., passed away on the 26th of March, 1888. He had been in very poor health for a long time, but a severe attack of pneumonia immediately preceded his demise. He suffered much, but bore it patiently, was fully aware that the end was come, but was resigned to the will of the Lord, and said, "It is all right." Thus passed away an affectionate son and brother, a loving and provident husband and father, a most excellent citizen and neighbor, and a "meek and lowly" subject of the Redeemer's kingdom. Brother Ferguson was deeply exercised experimentally, was firmly established in the doctrine of God our Savior. Election in Christ before the foundation of the world, the absolute government and unlimited predestination of our God, the fullness of grace in a finished salvation, were all precious themes to him.

The subject of this notice was a son of our venerable brother, Alfred Ferguson, and his aged and estimable consort, Sidenia Ferguson. He was born in

Greene County, Ohio, Sept. 2, 1839, married Miss Sarah Jane Rumbaugh, Sept. 22, 1865, and emigrated to Missouri in 1867. He and his wife united with the Old School Baptist Church called Oak Grove, in Jackson County, Mo., and were baptized by Elder Lucien B. Wright, on the first Sunday in May, 1875. His aged father and mother, the dear wife of his youth, one noble son and two lovely daughters, four brothers and one sister, are left to mourn his departure, but are not without the comforts of hope and love; also many relatives and friends in Ohio and Missouri, and all the household of faith who were acquainted with him. The writer has known him long and pleasantly. Elder R. M. Ogle preached a very comforting discourse on the occasion, using 1 Cor. v. 1.

May grace and peace be unto all that mourn.

R. M. THOMAS.

**DIED**—At the residence of his father, brother Henry Woolery, **Daniel Voohees Woolery**.

The subject of this notice was born in Lawrence County, Indiana, Oct. 26, 1868, moved to Johnson County, Kansas, in 1869, came to his last predestinated step ordered in eternity by our heavenly Father, which was very unexpected to his parents and sorrowing friends. The circumstances attending his death were as follows: On March 27th he started duck hunting on Indian Creek with a shot gun. It seems he discharged one barrel, and walked some distance before he stopped to load the barrel that he had discharged. He set the gun down and poured powder into his hand, and said he was at a loss to know which barrel he had discharged. While meditating, the other barrel discharged the whole load, taking effect in his left side, ranging upward under the left arm.

The doctors were called immediately, and after consultation pronounced it a mortal wound. He suffered and lingered along until April 3, 1888, when the spirit took its flight to God that gave it.

The subject of this notice never made a public profession, but in his affliction he certainly did give unmistakable evidence of the work of free and sovereign grace in the salvation of poor, lost and ruined sinners of Adam's race. I visited him once or twice every day during his sickness, and on the day he departed this life I was called to his bedside, and sat by him for about five hours; and if my poor tongue was ever loosed to speak of Jesus and his fullness to save sinners, it was on that occasion; seeing, as I hope I did, he had a mind to hear the things of the kingdom. When the end came I asked him if his blessed Savior was with him. He whispered, "Yes," and nodded assent. He requested me to preach at his funeral, which I tried to comply with, to the sorrowing friends and relatives, at his father's residence, on April 4th, using hymn 563, Beebe's Collection, and for a text Eph. ii. 8, 9. Then all that was mortal of Daniel Voohees Woolery was laid away, to await the trump of God, when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and enter into that rest prepared for the people of God. May the spirit of reconciling grace rest upon the afflicted family.

R. FLOURNOY.

OLATHE, Johnson Co., Kansas.

**DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE**—I received the sad news of the death of my own brother in the flesh, and in the faith and fellowship of the church of Christ, **Levi Hunt Bradbury**, who departed this life April 11, 1888, in the hope of eternal life, at his home, Osage Mission, Kansas, aged 77 years, 9 months and 5 days. He was born in Brown Co., Ohio, July 6, 1810, became a member of the Clover Church of Christ about fifty-five years ago, was baptized by Elder Aaron Sargent, con-

tinued a faithful member, believing fully in the doctrine of salvation by grace, as revealed according to the Bible.

He married Miss Mary Turner; removed from Ohio in 1835; settled in Fulton Co., Ill.; was elected a member of the State Legislature, served in two sessions, at the same time with Elders Shields and Cyrus Wright, two of our able Baptist ministers. By his first wife he had five sons, being married three times. His second wife was Miss Mary Krider, by whom he had four children, one girl and three boys. His last wife was Mrs. Amanda Hoyt, by whom he had one daughter. I am not able to say how many are still living. Several entered death's dark domain with his first two wives. His last is left, with four sons and two daughters, I think, and probably the oldest son, who went to Texas, and may not be dead.

He was greatly grieved and lonely on account of being so far away from the church, being about thirty-five miles from the last church he held membership with, and no Baptists near that he could converse with in his old age and poor health. He was a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, appreciating the sound doctrine it contained. In his last sickness he dreamed the angels appeared in his room and over him, which he seemed to think was a token of his near approach to death. So the Lord has taken him to the better land, where pain and sorrow are no more.

This is written mostly from memory, not having statistics at hand, being the request of my sister, his widow, through a letter, some three or four hundred miles away.

B. BRADBURY.

ABINGTON, Ill., May 22, 1888.

**DIED**—At Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., April 9, 1888, our dear sister, **Sally Reynolds**, wife of Deacon Cornelius Reynolds. She was born in Delaware Co., N. Y., Jan. 31, 1811, making her at the time of death over seventy-seven years of age. She was brought in early life to a knowledge of herself as a sinner and of Jesus as her Savior, and soon went to the church and was baptized by Elder David Mead. About thirty years ago herself and family moved to Broome County, after which she was received a member with the Otego Church, and remained with us an honored and beloved sister till called away by death. Having been much in her company these many years, I have been made to admire the lamb-like spirit of her Master, which grace had wrought within her. For many years she has been afflicted with the loss of sight, but was submissive under her trials. She was familiar with the Scriptures, and often made in church meetings very proper applications of them. Having a mild and retiring nature, a thorough work of the Spirit in her heart, a clear view of salvation by grace, made her of great value to her brethren and sisters. She was highly prized in her family as well, and through all her afflictions everything that kind hearts and faithful hands could invent for her comfort was cheerfully and readily ministered to her. She leaves our brother Reynolds, two sons and four daughters, to mourn their loss. May the Lord comfort and sustain the afflicted ones.

Her funeral was attended April 11 at the family home, when the writer tried to speak of the certain triumph of grace in bringing to glory all the Father had sealed.

Yours in bonds of love,

B. BUNDY.

OTEGO, April 17, 1888.

**DIED**—March 27, 1888, **Mrs. Rebecca Davis**, in the 91st year of her age.

The subject of this notice was remarkable in many things, especially her calm resignation to all the afflictions and dis-

appointments that have overtaken her in life. Many that read this will no doubt remember her wonderful resignation to her late affliction, loss of sight, having been entirely blind to the things of this world for eleven years; but she seemed continually, by an eye of faith, looking on things that are not seen, which are eternal. During all these years of blindness to all nature, she has never been heard to murmur or complain. For the last seven years I have had the privilege of seeing her quite often. She was always quietly waiting the appointed time, with all the meekness and patience desirable for any one.

This dear old sister was born Dec. 15, 1796, was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Rock Springs, Chester Co., Pa., April 19, 1818, by Elder Charles Moore, and died March 27, 1888, being a meek, humble follower of Jesus for almost seventy years. She was greatly beloved by all that knew her, but especially by all lovers of the truth.

She leaves one daughter and three grandchildren, with every one who knew her, to mourn her departure, yet with full assurance of her eternal happiness; for she died in full faith and hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave. She was fully ripe for the harvest, and to be gathered home with all the redeemed. Let us all with one accord say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

JOSEPH L. STATON.

NEWARK, Del., June 5, 1888.

**DIED**—April 25, 1888, in her seventy-third year, at her home near Mt. Healthy, Hamilton County, Ohio, sister **Rachael Maria Rogers**, daughter of Jediah and Eliza Hill. She was born in Somerset Co., N. J., and came with her parents to Hamilton Co., Ohio, and lived for seventy years on the farm on which she died. She was received into the fellowship of the Mill Creek Church of Primitive Baptists, baptized by Elder Wilson Thompson in November, 1843, and lived a most devoted, humble christian, until the time of her death, showing in her life unmistakable proofs of the power of reigning grace and the presence of the Spirit of Christ; for while very meek and humble, she was firm and unwavering in her faith in Jesus as her Savior.

And as she lived, so she died, resigned to the will of her Lord, in whom she trusted. She leaves her aged companion, Henry Rogers, one son and his family, with many relations and friends, to mourn her absence.

The high esteem in which she was held by her neighbors was clearly manifest by the very large concourse of people who attended the funeral, where a discourse was delivered for their comfort by the writer.

HARVEY WRIGHT.

**Mrs. Nancy Chiles** joined the church of Jesus Christ of Particular Baptists at Bryans, Fayette County, Kentucky, the third Saturday in February, 1856. She left the shores of time March 16, 1888.

"Journeying to that beautiful land,  
The far away home of the soul."

Whilst she remained with us she gave evidence by a pious walk and a godly conversation that she had been with Jesus and was taught of God. Her continued and long lasting sufferings and bad health were borne with a degree of patience and hope scarcely to be equalled, firm and uncompromising in the doctrine of God our Savior. The end of this life found her patient, waiting for the God of grace to call her home.

And we would say to her children, kindred and friends, Weep not for her, but rather that the godly man ceaseth, and the faithful fail from among the children of men.

J. W. ROYSTER.

My beloved wife, **Evangelia B. West**, passed from her home here to a brighter one on high, May 3, at 12 m. Her faith in Christ was perfect, and she longed to be released from earth and go to his bosom. She died of consumption. She was quite comfortable, however, till within a week, when she suffered very much. The evening before she died she called us all by name, and commended us to the Lord's care, and then said, "Lift up my arms; lift them up, lift them up, up, up." Then she said, "Christ's arms were lifted up." Then from midnight till noon she was dying. She fell asleep in Jesus. Blessed be his holy name.

She leaves a son and daughter to comfort and console me, and she has greatly strengthened my hope and trust in God.

Yours truly,

J. B. WEST.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., May 5, 1888.

**CHURCH HISTORY DEBT OF \$2000.**

**ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS**—**DEAR BRETHREN**—I inclose the list of Church History Debt Contributions during the month of May. The brethren and friends are responding very kindly to the appeals made to them by our leading periodicals. By the liberality of Old School or Primitive Baptists, who are stigmatized as the most selfish and uncharitable people in the world, I to day send to Wilson checks for two hundred and twenty dollars to be applied to the payment of my note for two thousand dollars which is held there.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., June 7, 1888.

**CONTRIBUTIONS DURING MAY.**

**ARKANSAS**—James P. Haley 1, N. C. Yarbrough 1, Warren Hartsfield 1, W. Kelly 50c, Mrs. Dora Taxon 1, J. H. Landers 1, Wm. Pace 4.

**COLORADO**—Levi S. Bloomfield 2.

**DELAWARE**—S. H. Bishop 50c.

**FLORIDA**—John Cowart 1, John Conant 1.

**GEORGIA**—Elder S. T. Bently 2, John Pye 1, Miss Sallie Lasseter 1, J. C. Norris 50c, C. J. Reeves 1, Mt. Moriah Church 6 50, M. C. Jones 1, James K. Brown 1.

**ILLINOIS**—Gilas Reeder 3, Wm. Clore 1 50, Samuel R. Cooper, 2 50, J. J. Fitzgerald 3.

**INDIANA**—Elder David Bartley 1.

**IOWA**—Mrs. G. Jaqua 1, Mrs. Lydia Thomas 1, W. A. Turner 1, N. B. Libley 2.

**KANSAS**—T. R. Pittman 50c.

**KENTUCKY**—H. R. Littell 5.

**MARYLAND**—John and Sarah Varnes 3, Mrs. M. E. Parsons 5.

**MISSISSIPPI**—Mrs. Sarah Bartley 1, Mrs. A. M. E. Strickland 1, I. K. Strickland 1.

**MISSOURI**—Mrs. E. C. Teague 1, W. A. Turner 1, Thos. W. Records 1.

**MONTANA**—Kate E. Mills 2.

**MAINE**—Rhodo Butler 1, Elder Wm. Quint 1.

**NEW YORK**—Hannah Lane 2, Mrs. Mary Uptegrove 1, Miss Eva Sayer 3, A Friend at East Masonville 1, Mrs. John Axford 2, C. M. Herrick 2, Mrs. Henry J. Dutcher 2, Mrs. Drusilla Wheeler 2.

**NORTH CAROLINA**—Elder M. T. Lawrence 1, B. L. C. Bryan 1, Justus Everett 1, John Salisbury 1, Mrs. Jane Jarvis 1, Mrs. D. G. Gillespie 1, Mrs. E. M. Quinley 1, James Cobb 1, Robt. Harris 2 50, H. C. Harris 2 50, E. Ruffin Harris 1, Mrs. M. M. Hassell 1, David Hardison 1, Mrs. Prury Robertson 1, Miss Sarah Jane Reddick 5, Simon D. Ward 1.

**NEW JERSEY**—E. Henderson 2.

**OHIO**—Unknown Friend in Cincinnati 5, Wm. Smith 1, G. W. Fukerson 2, Mattie S. Derr 1.

**OREGON**—P. B. Heckard 2.

**PENNSYLVANIA**—Miss M. B. Nivin 5, Mary A. Lefferts 1.

TENNESSEE—Chas. Paston 1, Elder J. W. Reddick 1.

TEXAS—J. A. Fanning 1, Mrs. W. M. Jones 2, F. Taylor 2, A. M. Starling 1, L. J. Starling 1, Elder W. C. Burks 1, Jasper Thomas 1, D. Ford 1, R. Brooks 1.

WEST VIRGINIA—Elder J. S. Corder 1, Truivan E. Cole 1.

ONTARIO, CANADA—Thomas A. Ardies, 2.

Total..... \$109 00

Total previously published.... 70 00

Grand total to date..... 179 00

### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY

M. R. Rockett 2, Wm. R. Humphrey 2, Geo. Trowbridge 2, Mrs. Matilda Bender 2, A. S. McDonald 2, F. P. Branscome 2 50, Mrs. Wm. H. Wilson 2 50, Wm. Slade 17 50, E. F. Goff 2 50, Mrs. A. J. Walton 2, Richard Nixon 2. Total—\$39 00.

### APPOINTMENTS.

EDITORS SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—If it is not asking too much, I would like the following appointments for Elder Caudell, of Kentucky, announced in the first of July number of the SIGNS.

In Ohio—Mill Creek Church, July 14th and 15th; Middle Creek, 17th; Clear Creek, 18th; Lebanon, 19th; Tapscott, 20th; Centerville, 21st and 23d; Reynoldsburgh, 24th; Walnut Creek, 25th; Pleasant Run, 26th; Union, 27th; Hebron, 28th and 29th; Gratiot, 30th; Bulah, 31st; Falls of Licking Shonon, August 1st; Pleasant Hill, 2d; St. Louisville, 3d; Wayne, 4th and 5th; North Fork, 6th; Mt. Pisgah, 7th; Ashley, 8th; Marlborough, 9th; Honey Creek, 11th and 12th; Vanburen, 14th; Albion, Indiana, 15th; Mt. Salem Association, 17th, 18th and 19th.

Brother Caudell's return will be through Indiana; the announcements will be made later.

With best regards, I remain, as ever, yours in hope,

ABRAM H. SMITH.

LIGONIER, Ind., May 21, 1888.

### FUNERAL NOTICE.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish that Elder J. E. Newkirk will preach a discourse in memory of sister Docia Hammond, at Mount Vernon Church, on the fifth Sunday in July, at eleven o'clock a. m., by request of her children, and also by her own request before she died.

A FRIEND.

GRAEFENBERG, Ky., June 8, 1888.

### ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Mt. Gilead Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with the Mt. Gilead Church, two and one-half miles east of Hersman, Brown Co., Ill., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in August (8th), 1888, and continue in session three days.

Trains from the east will be met at the Wabash depot at Hersman, at 8:30 p. m., Tuesday, and 9:15 a. m., Wednesday; from the west, at 6:02 p. m., Tuesday, and 6:12 a. m., Wednesday. Those coming at other times will inquire for brethren D. W. Owens, Jas. Harper or John Jackson.

NATHAN PERRY.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet four miles north of Flannagan in Livingston Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by the Illinois Central R. R. will change cars at Kankakee Junction, and stop at Fulannagan. Those coming by the Santa Fe R. R. will stop at Dana. Those coming from the west will have to change cars at Ancona, and stop at Dana. There will be means of conveyance to each place to take those attending to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is given to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Baptists will meet, the Lord permitting, with Plum Creek Church, six miles northwest of Winchester, Scott Co., Ill., at 10 o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1888. Brethren from a distance are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the east or west on the Wabash R. R., will be met with conveyances at Bluff City on Saturday morning, about 8 o'clock, trains arriving. Those from the north or south on the C. B. and Q. R. R., will be met at Winchester on Friday and Saturday at noon.

G. W. MURRAY, Mod.  
GILES REEDER, Clerk.

### TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a two days meeting of the Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, with the Middleburgh Church, in Schoharie County, N. Y., to commence on Saturday before the second Sunday in July. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, especially ministering brethren, to meet with us.

M. P. COOPER.

### A FIVE DAYS DEBATE

ON

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# Signs of the Times.

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1888.

NO. 14.

## POETRY.

### JOHN XIV. 13.

"AND whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

Jesus, my Lord, I come to thee,

A weary, way-worn child.  
The flowers of earth were sweet to me,  
Their dew freshness fair to see,  
And so I wandered far from thee,  
Through briars dark and wild.

Almighty God, to thee I come  
With torn and bleeding feet.  
O tell me if there still is room  
For me, as in the days now gone!  
I pray thee lead the wanderer home  
To rest supremely sweet.

I come to thee alone, O Lord!  
All other springs are dry.  
I would not of my own accord,  
But hungering, thirsting for thy word,  
Which food and raiment both afford  
For one so poor as I.

I do not pray as once I prayed,  
For light on all the way;  
But only let my trust be stayed  
On thee, and make me not afraid.  
O let my soul be not dismayed  
At each unfolding day.

For all the measure of my life  
Is portioned out for me;  
And should it be with sorrow rife,  
Or should it be a sunny life,  
I pray thee that discord and strife  
May from my portion flee.

And make me patiently perform  
My heavenly Father's will.  
O hold me in the gathering storm;  
Thou knowest my frail and fragile form.  
As thou art God, O make me strong  
Thy chosen place to fill.

SALLIE M. BARTLEY.  
NEW CASTLE, Ind., May 9, 1888.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., June 23, 1888.

G. BERBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The words in Genesis ii. 20, last clause, have been in my mind much during the past two or three years, in connection with the last chapter of Proverbs, from the tenth verse to the end; and I have much desired, and have requested some brethren, to write or preach about them. No one, however, has as yet responded. My mind is still every now and then occupied with these words; and I believe that they contain rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge, if only the Holy Spirit shall but take them and show them unto us.

I do not feel competent to present these treasures. Yet I can say the same about any portion of the word of the Lord; and if I wait to speak or write until I can tell all, I am sure that I shall never open my lips to speak in the name of the Lord. We

see in part and know in part, at the most; and the Lord can ordain strength out of the child-like speech of babes and sucklings. So I feel like trying to suggest a few thoughts concerning these Scriptures.

In the text referred to in Genesis we read, "But for Adam there was not found a help meet [or suitable] for him." The last chapter of Proverbs referred to contains that wonderful account of the virtuous woman, which is so beautiful in the estimation of every thoughtful mind. These two passages of the word have always associated themselves together in my mind, and so I wish to write about them both together. It has seemed to me that the description of the virtuous woman in Proverbs might serve as a full commentary upon the idea presented in Genesis, that Eve was to be a *help* just suited to Adam.

While the relation of husband and wife is in general taken to illustrate the relation between Christ and the church, yet we have special authority for regarding our first parents as types of this heavenly bride and bridegroom. Whatever Adam was to Eve, that is Christ to the church; and whatever Eve was to Adam, that is the church to Christ. In manifold Scriptures is the fullness of what Christ is to his church presented; and this is the theme which warms, stirs up and gladdens every believing heart. But in these Scriptures now under consideration there seems to me to be declared what the church is to her husband and Lord. The wife loves her husband, and is glad to receive favors at his hand; but how exceeding blessed a privilege it is to know that she is the object of the husband's love, and that it is hers to minister pleasure and delight to him! The Scriptures which speak of the joy of the church in her Beloved, also speak of the joy of the Lord in his bride. They speak of service rendered to the bride by the husband, but they also speak of service rendered to him by her. But there is this difference: the church cannot do without his service in her behalf, while he does not need anything at the hands of any one. He gives to her, in the first place, life and breath and all things, so that she has nothing that she has not received; but yet he graciously grants her the privilege of pouring out her heart to him, by receiving from her hands service such as she delights to render. The church could not do without Christ, just as Eve could not do

without Adam. The church owes her very existence as a church to Christ, just as Eve owed her existence to Adam; and as the church is made up of redeemed sinners of Adam's race, and when we speak of the church we mean the whole number of redeemed sinners, it follows that each one of us individually and personally is concerned in this theme. What Christ is to the church, he is to each one of his people; and what the church is to Christ, each redeemed man or woman is to him. The church is not an abstract, intangible something, but is the whole body of men and women who have been redeemed unto God out of every nation, tongue, kindred and people under heaven. Therefore, as we speak of the church owing her very existence to Christ, as Eve owed hers to Adam, so each vessel of mercy is such, because of having been chosen in Christ, redeemed by Christ, and now brought through the indwelling of the Spirit into personal union and communion with our Lord and Savior. As Eve derived life and existence from Adam, so each believer derives spiritual life and existence from Jesus Christ. We are what we are as believers through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, making us one with Jesus.

This, it seems to me, is the first and most prominent thought, both in the text in Genesis and in the last chapter of Proverbs. It is the first and most prominent thought in the marriage relation among men. The wife derives her name, her legal and social standing, yea, all the legal and social existence she has, and all the name she bears, from her husband. This is God's appointment. It ought to be so, and it is so. Otherwise the marriage relation could not be used to illustrate this heavenly marriage. A secondary thought in these two Scriptures upon which I am writing is that the husband provides for the wife, not only her very existence and standing, but he it is that provides her with a home, with food and raiment, and with every needful comfort and blessing. The wife originates nothing. She simply receives what the husband provides. She is the object of his tenderest solicitude and care. Day by day he opens his store-house and fills her hands with good; and in considering the other side of this matter, viz., in what sense the church is a "help" for her husband, this must not be lost sight of. Whatever the church is to Christ, she is that because of what

Christ is to her. If any of God's works praise him, and give him delight, and render him service, it is because he made them so, and they but fulfill the design for which he made them. The first wife, Eve, could not have been a help meet (or suitable) for Adam had she not been part of himself, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh; and so poor sinners like us could not be a suitable wife for Christ unless we also had come to live in him and by him. As Eve bore the life of Adam in her body, so must Christ, who is our life, dwell in us. As our first parents could live in union, sympathy, fellowship and love, because they were of one life and one nature; so there can be and is union and communion and fellowship between Christ and the church, because there is one life and one nature in them both. Thus, and thus only, could Adam sympathize with and provide for Eve just what she required for her happiness, and Eve be a help meet for him; and thus, and thus only, can Christ and the church, or the poor sinner, be mutually helpful and joyful to each other. Right here I would remark that we have another reason for saying that a sinner yet destitute of Christ, the true life, can never do anything pleasing to Jesus, or be in any sense a help to him. Though such an one may do all things, yet having not the love of God shed abroad in his heart, he is in God's sight no more than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Works, even the best, done out of Christ, are but dead works after all. Had Eve not been one with Adam, she could have done nothing whatever to his joy or comfort; and so Christ must be and is all and in all to his bride. She is a help meet for him, because in him she finds all things.

Now when a poor sinner comes into the possession of such an assurance as this, and feels that this Jesus is his lover and husband, the response of his heart in its gratitude and joy and love is, How can I serve so good a husband? Is there any way in which I can be of use in his house—any way in which I can minister to him? This question is right and proper, and it has its answer; and this answer may be found in every admonition found in the New Testament, and in every example set us in the word. Everything that relates to our suitable behavior in the house of God relates to this. Jesus is not here in proper person, that we may minister to him, as did Martha and

Mary, or as the woman who in her great love and gratitude washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head; but to willing, loving hearts he said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." In this we find the key of all our service. If we help each other for Jesus' sake, he regards it as though we are doing it for him. O how glorious the most menial service would appear if we could but see Jesus in it! Jesus in the one who serves prompting to the service, and Jesus in the one who is served receiving the service. Whatever is given, it is Jesus who gives; and O what value is in the gift, since his hands have given it! What a glorious privilege it is to serve Jesus! We know that he needs nothing, and yet he lets us serve him. I have seen a little child with feeble hands, that could hardly hold an implement of husbandry, beg its father to let it help him; and while the father needed not his help, and perhaps found it a hindrance, yet for the love he bore his child he granted his request. The child was proud and happy; and the father smiled and spoke words of encouragement to see the child's willing mind. So Jesus needs not our service, but yet accepts it with smiles, because of the love that prompted it.

But while this is the general view of the matter as it appears to me, I yet feel my mind drawn more to the last chapter of Proverbs, as that which illustrates best the text in Genesis. The service in the house and in the family of the wife and mother of children, that must be cared for and trained up for usefulness, is here presented. First, she is called a virtuous woman. The primary meaning of the word "virtue" is strength. It meant in the first use of it among the ancients strength of body; but it afterward came to be applied to mental and moral qualities. Afterward we find it used with regard to spiritual things. It still, however, retained the idea of strength. Strength to overcome foes of all kinds, and to do what might be desired, is meant. The meaning of this question is, Who can find a woman strong in doing the right, faithful and steadfast and true to the trust committed to her, who cannot be turned aside by any temptation, by any labor or hardship, from the trust committed to her? Who can find a woman wholly devoted to the honor of her husband and the welfare of her family? Such a woman is above price. All women are not so. This is implied by the question, Who can find a church of which this is true? Where is the church which regards the honor of Jesus and the welfare of her children first and always and supremely? Who can find a church forsaking her own case that her children may be clothed and fed? What church regards her husband as all and in all, and has no disposition to dally with other lovers, nor

to depart from his commands, nor to forsake his interests? Here are those the sons of God who are seeking a bride. They desire a home. When they shall have found her, this true and faithful church, it shall be true "that as a young man marries a virgin," so shall they marry this church. In this chapter the mother of Lemuel advises him whom to avoid and whom to seek. She advises him to depart from woman, who will rob him of his strength, and to depart from wine, which will pervert his judgment; but seek after a woman who is clothed with integrity, and who is faithful. She will do him good, and not evil, all his life. She will not take from him, but add to him. But who can find such a woman? There are many who are false. Where shall we find the true? Christ has a virtuous bride on earth. Where shall we find her? There are many Lemuels still who are seeking a home for their weary hearts. They love God and desire his honor; where shall they find that people whose God is the Lord? They want to find the bride of Jesus; by what token shall they know her?

Certain marks are given. This virtuous wife does certain things. She is a help "meet" for her husband, and a careful provider for her children. She is under certain obligations to her husband, and these obligations she joyfully acknowledges and takes upon herself. In each verse of this last chapter of Proverbs there is food for long reflection. Of course it is not my purpose to comment upon each verse. Time and space would both forbid this. Let us read it, and perhaps we may catch glimpses of the spiritual things shadowed forth by the natural. "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honor are her clothing;

and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

Some general reflections occur to me in looking over these words. One of them is that the good wife keeps her house in order. She has stated rules, such as are pleasing to her husband and for the good of her family. She does not allow disorder or strife or bickering or insubordination. She insists upon good order and quiet, that when her husband comes in he may find a peaceful resting place, and may not be disturbed by complaining. As she reveres her husband, she teaches her family to revere him also. What a blessed sight it is to see such a family! It is a most delightful haven of rest to find an orderly church where peace and union abound. In this the church is a help meet for Christ.

Another reflection is that she does not suffer her family to eat the bread of idleness. Before the day even she has her household astir. All find something to do. Here are no drones, no idle hands. If a church is faithful, she will require that each and every one in the house shall do some task. There is ground to till, a ship to be sent, food to be prepared, garments to be spun and woven, the naked to be clothed, the hungry to be fed, the sick to be visited, the hearth to be filled with fuel, the house to be swept and garnished, guests to be entertained, her husband's friends to be welcomed; all, all have enough to do. Are we as churches seeing to it that Satan finds no idle hands among us—that the Master of the house finds our loins girt and lamps burning when he shall come?

Another reflection occurs to me in reading this chapter. The virtuous wife makes all provision for her household. She is not afraid for the snow, for her household are clothed with the scarlet cloth of her weaving. The church moved by the right spirit will make provision for a stated ministry of the word, and will see to it that her children are taught sound doctrine, so that when the cold of adversity shall come they may not be moved nor suffer harm, and that they may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Another reflection occurs, namely, that the church of God is not a "do nothing" church. She has nothing to do with becoming the Lamb's wife; but as his wife her hands are full of work, that she may honor and glorify his name, and do good to all the household of faith.

What a joyful picture is here drawn! What a happy family is such a family! Well can a child of God say of such a place, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." He who can say this belongs in this house. The Lord has put him among the children.

Now does it not become us to ask ourselves whether we are each one filling our place as members of the Lamb's wife, and as helps meet or suitable for him? What a glorious privilege is ours! Do we esteem it so?

In conclusion I will say that I have not satisfied myself in what I have said. I shall feel better satisfied if others shall be moved to write about the same theme, and to trace out more fully the various ways in which the church is a help meet for Christ.

I remain, as ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., April 4, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—As month by month passes by, and the SIGNS comes richly laden with fresh communications from the afflicted and poor people of the Lord, it seems to invigorate the plants of our heavenly Father's planting. It is truly as doctrine and speech through God unto them; like dropping dew and refreshing showers on earthly plants, showing the Lord's work and power in their hearts, as he works in them mightily by his Spirit to will and do of his good pleasure; in all their ways of trial and rejoicing, in the days of their pilgrimage, through the much tribulation through which they shall enter the kingdom of heaven, whether it be to the one who is quickened by his life-giving power, and mourns over sin, and longs to eat and drink of heavenly things, or those that have professed his name. As he needs their testimony, he prepares them to act and speak; and as they speak and act, he gives them to know that his grace is sufficient for them, and that he will provide. But they do not always discern his hand with clearness enough to say, "He leadeth me," when passing through the deep waters of affliction, and dark clouds of trial and unbelief settle down over them, or they are suddenly wafted by winds to and fro, to cover their spiritual sky, and to shut out the Sun of righteousness. Each one of these plants stands like an earthly plant, needing a portion of sunshine, clouds and rain, for its growth. But as "time and chance happeneth to all," we only know of an earthly plant by its condition; and very few earthly plants can endure the continual shining of the sun. Although the nights come to hide the sun's burning rays, this one thing is noticeable in the country

where I live, that too long spells of clear weather are followed by dewless nights, and vegetation becomes parched. Some plants sooner than others, from their location, show the effect. All these things teach us the utility of clouds, storms, heat, light and moisture for earthly plants: so the changes of the people of the living God cause them to grow up and bear fruit, having strength equal to their day of trial, and trial enough to bring them low at the footstool of God, and at the threshold of mercy to cry out by reason of failing strength, as them that have no might. Even to them, before they call, it is written, "I the Lord will hear; and while they are yet calling, I will answer them."

I have often found this verified in my own experience. My trials often bring far the best results, as it regards my expectation, by faith discovering more fully the conformation to the death of Jesus, and more beneficial and lasting comfort in the thought of his resurrection life and power. I have also heard during the past winter some very lucid expressions, and have seen some of the glorious work of our great Husbandman in translating some from the kingdom of Satan, into the kingdom of his dear Son, in which a desire has been given some to walk with the Lord. It has been my privilege to hear four such tell what the Lord had done for their souls, and two have been privileged to follow their Lord in his appointed way, into the watery grave, even though the ice which covered it must be removed; and two are awaiting baptism. Truly God is good to Israel. His mercy is over them that fear him. Blessed be his name, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." He also knoweth the way they take, even their uprisings and down-sittings. And while a man's heart deviseth his way, the Lord directeth his steps; for it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The Lord keepeth the feet of his saints during all their sojourn. As he only knew ancient Israel in the covenant of works, as no other nation were bound by that law, so that nation alone received punishment for their departures from that law; and the greatest departure of Israel was in their lack of love and obedience to God and to one another. So our Lord Jesus Christ, standing in the breach, spiritually acknowledges none of the children of men except those to whom he shows his covenant, ordered in all things and sure. To them he commits his secret. For "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." And with such the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom as well as to hate evil. Therefore they all, as his chosen witnesses, receive a banner, agreeing with their nationality, and showing their authority for displaying the banner given them. And as it is to be displayed because of their heart-

felt interest in the truth and love of God, in the name of their God and King they set up their banner. As a holy nation their conversation is in heaven, being created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. The yoke of Jesus is easy, and his burden light, and easily borne by them; and when trusting alone in him, as faith directs them, each child must know what the victory cost, and how hardly it was won.

I have been reminded in reading the sixth number of the present volume of the SIGNS, of what the christian warfare is, and of the weapons used by the saints in all ages in that warfare. Surely every one as they come in conflict with their foes, whether the world, flesh or devil, does know they are not carnal (fleshly), but "mighty through God;" for when in their experience they felt they were the very ends of the earth, they were privileged and constrained by sovereign and reigning grace to look unto the Lord for salvation and deliverance, and drew near and came, as sinners who were saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, but the gift of God. Neither was it by works of righteousness which they had done; not even in believing; but it was of God's abounding grace and goodness unto them. Their believing was entirely the work of God. Hence their faith gets them the victory; for it is the substance of all they hope for, and that is to be like Christ; and only when they awake in his likeness will they be satisfied. So the victory over every foe is given the saints through Jesus Christ their Lord. Therefore the faith that comes by hearing, and the hearing by the word of God, teaches that the word of God is quick and powerful; and it teaches the one that has the Spirit of Christ: for except a man have the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Thus "the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." Then as with the heart (prepared by the Lord) man believes unto righteousness, so with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (that is, a full deliverance is acknowledged). So when a man's ways please the Lord (when he trusts alone in him and leaves all with him, by that love shed abroad in his heart), he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. It is not needful for any of the Lord's little ones to fret themselves because of evil doers, much less be envious at the wicked, but trust in the Lord, for in him is everlasting strength. Our Redeemer was afflicted in all the afflictions of his people, and the angel or spirit of his presence saved them. Thus the Lord has been, is now, and ever will be, the refuge and strength of his people, even a very present help in trouble. We believe there are times that our enemies are at peace with us, and we grow in favor and stature with God and

men; yet there is no time that our faith does not necessarily need trying; and so essential is it, that though it may be of a fiery nature, and as a strange thing happening to us, yet more precious is it than perishable gold.

I feel glad that there is a rallying of brethren and friends for the maintaining of the SIGNS. In this blessed medium, the SIGNS, through which the saints communicate, there is both food and drink, as the experience of the saints and the strong meat of eternal truth is presented; and it necessarily will be in all the strength and fullness of the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. Their faith at times beholds the flea as well as behemoth, portraying his almighty power, and revealing his heavenly love, to fix or establish beforehand all things that are to work for good to his elect people; and as all things are for the elect's sake, and it is given them in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake, so no evil thing can be an obstacle in the way, as the working together includes all the work of our God in connection with the salvation of his people; for all his works shall praise him, and his saints shall bless him. Then the nearer the saints come on to their heavenly rest, through great tribulation, through darkness, doubts and fears, after mourning an absent God, feeling a weakness of faith and fullness of unbelief, the more dark, dismal and stormy the night, the more they welcome the morn. The Lord will continue to bring the blind by a way they knew not, and give his people rest in his gospel, by that invisible power and work felt in their hearts, as they walk by faith; and it must and will be true with every one, "If any man glory, let him glory in the Lord."

One hoping only in the Lord,  
J. D. HUBBELL.

WESTON, Mich., Feb. 5, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request I send this letter to you for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you think it best, and will not crowd out other and better matter. I submit it to your better judgment. I remain yours to serve in gospel bonds,  
T. J.

ELD. McDONALD—DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD:—This evening I received your very welcome and interesting letter, and can say of a truth that we were glad to hear from you, but sorry to hear that you had received so bad a hurt. Dear brother, may the dear Lord by his grace be with and comfort you in your affliction, for I believe it is among the all things that shall work together for good to all the household of faith. Truly I am glad to know that you are found settled and grounded in the doctrine of God our Savior; for our God is a Sovereign; he is supreme, the Almighty, and

devils can only move in strict accordance with his divine will and eternal wisdom. He orders, and it comes to pass. Height, depth, principalities and powers, things present and things to come, are ordered, ruled and overruled by his omnipotent will. Yea, the wicked are sent strong delusions (Paul says God sends) to believe a lie, that they all might be damned who have pleasure in unrighteousness. Jesus has declared in regard to the finally impenitent that they are condemned already. But in regard to the chosen sons and daughters of our God he has said, by the mouth of the prophet, "I have redeemed thee, O Israel." "His name shall be called Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." O what a blessed thing it is to know by experience that Jesus is our Savior. The Arminian world can sing, "A charge to keep I have;" but God's little children are made to sing, "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! that saved a wretch like me." God's people experience that they are weak and helpless, and if saved it is because of God's long-suffering and tender mercy; and instead of their glorifying God by their own works, they are made to adopt the language of their blessed Savior, "Father, glorify thou me." Yea, dear Lord, clothe me with the garment of salvation; clothe me with that blessed and glorious robe that was wrought by Jesus. Dear brother, it has appeared to me for a long time that one that has experienced a good hope through grace, with the Bible before him, and the Spirit to guide and teach him, must be of very slow understanding that cannot see that the Bible abounds with testimony to prove beyond successful controversy that God is a Sovereign, that he is the Almighty, the great I AM, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and that all things come to pass according to his eternal will and counsel. He is declared to be above all things. His will and counsel determined all things. He moved the prophets to foretell great and wonderful events that should come to pass. The Bible teaches that God shall send strong delusions, that the wicked and unrighteous shall believe a lie. Do we believe it? or shall we contradict the testimony of the apostle, and say we do not believe it? Dear brother, I am bound to believe the testimony of the Scriptures, though I must acknowledge that with my weak and limited understanding I cannot fathom the boundless ocean of God's eternal wisdom, purpose and foreknowledge. I cannot explain why he made that old serpent, the devil, nor why he quickeneth some of the sons and daughters of men, and some he hardeneth, unless it is because "Even so, father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Now suppose, for the sake of argument, that he can do wrong, or that he has done wrong; where in all the realms of

nature can we find a tribunal by which to try him? Is he to be tried, judged, and sentence rendered against him, by any of his multitude of creation? The thought is awful indeed.

"Shall the vile race of flesh and blood Contend with their Creator God?"

Why, the breath of man is in his nostrils; his ways are all marked out and ordered by God's all-wise and unchangeable decrees; hence God has declared by the mouth of the prophet that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Now some one may ask, If man does what God has predestinated and decreed that he should do, how can God be just in rendering the sentence of condemnation against him? I will simply say, or ask, Did not Judas receive a just recompense for his terrible and awful crime? Peter, one of God's servants, declares that it was according to God's will, counsel and foreknowledge. Poor, weak and sinful man, whose breath is in his nostrils, the poison of asps under his lips, whose feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery in all his ways, is this the kind of a tribunal that creature man would arraign the Author of their existence before, the eternal God, to be tried and judged according to words that come from their throat, which is an open sepulchre, and with a tongue which has used deceit? O, dear brother, would not such a set of men make a grand tribunal by which the God of heaven must be tried, and pronounced guilty? I remember that over eighteen hundred years ago there was a set of men that bribed certain men, by giving them money to lie against the Son of God, because of his doctrine. Is man any better now? No; for God has said that they should wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. If man should suborn false witnesses against the Son of God, shall we expect any better from them now? No; for there never has been a day nor an hour but that the doctrine of election and predestination of our God has suffered more or less from the mouths of false witnesses. The doctrine of predestination and election; though a Bible doctrine, is not, nor can be, received by the natural man, for it is foolishness to him; neither can he know it, because it is spiritually discerned. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and understands the things of the flesh, and cannot go beyond that. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and receives and believes spiritual things. The doctrine of election, predestination and foreknowledge of God are things of the Spirit. They that are born of God are born into the understanding, to a certain extent, of the doctrine of God our Savior. Now, dear brother, the many things that pertain to the sovereign will and decree of our adorable King and High Priest, that I cannot understand, may my mouth be closed in silence, and I become

dumb before our heavenly Father, rather than attempt to impeach one of his attributes.

"Keep silence, all created things,  
And wait your Maker's nod;  
My soul stands trembling while she sings  
The honors of her God."

It is my candid conviction that there is none of all the Adamic race that feels with a child-like simplicity to bow in solemn adoration and in humble acknowledgment that what our God has ordained and done is right, except those that God has been pleased to reveal himself unto, by teaching them that they are poor, wretched, ruined, lost and undone sinners, and that they are justly condemned by his righteous and holy law. They are made to keenly feel the weight of their condemnation and guilt, and to acknowledge with the poet,

"Though my soul were sent to hell,  
Thy righteous law approves it well."

But O what ecstasy of joy and love fills their soul when Jesus reveals himself to them as their sin-bearing Savior. But from that time, O how many dark and cloudy seasons, trials and temptations the dear child of God is called to pass through. Can one who is a christian have such a heart as mine? Will I ever praise my blessed Jesus at his right hand, where there are pleasures forevermore?

THOMAS J. WYMAN.

MIAMI COUNTY, Kan., Feb. 23, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I send you a letter written by brother Dodd, giving his christian experience. If after you examine it you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I would be glad to see it published.

Your brother in hope of eternal life,  
S. P. RAMEY.

LA CYGNE, Kansas, Feb. 5, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I will try to write you how times have been with us since last we met. I must tell you something about Elders Ramey and Flournoy. When they made us a visit, they did not just put in their appearance, but they gave us a feast of good things, even the truth. I do not think I ever heard men speak the truth plainer before a congregation than they did. It appears to me that those who had eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand, could not help but say amen to such preaching. There were some that said to me the first time I met them after the meeting, "That preaching was good." They thought it was good in two ways, that they preached the truth and exposed error. Brethren, there is not a monthly meeting day comes around at Gilead, but my mind wanders up there. I think it is between forty and fifty miles, and I can get there but seldom. Sometimes I wonder if the brethren wonder why I desire or have a name among them; but if they are not my people, I have

none, and am alone. But I am not alone, for I trust that Christ is with me, and died that I might live. I believe God guides his children in every step, and that he tries every one of them as he did Job, in a measure, to show his children that he is God, and besides him there is no other.

I will try to write some of my experience. The first serious thought that I remember, and the first tear that I shed, was when I was about seven years old, if my memory serves me right. I saw the earth, sky, sun, moon and stars, and that God made them, just spoke them into existence, and said, "Let there be light," and it was. It took such a hold on me that I could not forget it. When I was about eighteen years old the Methodists held a protracted meeting about four miles southeast of father's, and I went to the meeting. Some of the young people professed to get religion. Some of them were younger and some older than I was. Brother James about that time professed a hope in Christ, being older than I. Sister Angeline professed a hope in Christ about the same time, she being younger than I. Thus my case seemed a hopeless one, and I thought I was one of the castaways at that time. I thought the Methodists were right, and that people could get religion by asking for it at any time. Some of the Methodists saw that I was in trouble, and requested me to go to the mourners' bench with others. So I went, but could stay there but a little while. When I kneeled down there it appeared to be mockery, while I was in earnest. I got up and left the meeting house. Time passed on until I was about twenty-five years old. One night I dreamed that I was walking east on a beautiful, smooth plain. I had passed by a people that were writhing in all the torment that could be imagined, and as I looked in the opposite direction I saw a great company of people in all the joys and happiness that people could have. I dreamed this dream three times in one night. I felt glad that I had passed by torment, but felt sorry that I was not walking straight to that happy people that were in heaven. I gleaned a little comfort from this, for I was in trouble. Time passed on till I was about thirty-three years old, when the Missionary Baptists held a protracted meeting about one mile from where we lived. I was at work in the woods five miles from home, and a man came to me and commenced making fun of the meeting, and told me something that some of them had said at the meeting. I told him that was in the Scripture, and he walked off and left me. The thought struck me that such a wretch as I was ought not to be telling a man what was in the Bible. It took such a hold on me that I quit my work in time to go home and take my family and attend the meeting at night. They appear-

ed to enjoy themselves, and had a warm time, as it is called. I got as close as I could without being in their way, and as they would pass around shaking hands I would give them mine. That was as far as I could go, for it seemed to me that if I should take another step God would cut me down in my hypocrisy. Thus I stood for seven nights. Finally I was taken with pneumonia. I lay for nineteen days, and it was thought that I could not recover. During this sickness I spoke something about religion, and mother asked me if I was all right. I told her I was not, but if I died I would die begging for mercy. I told the family that I would rather hear Mr. Anderson preach than any man that I had ever heard preach. Anderson was the man that was carrying on the missionary revival meeting. They sent for Mr. Anderson, and when he came the first words that I remember hearing him say to me, he asked me if I had ever prayed. I told him that I had tried. He said, "You are all right." The thought struck me in a moment that he did not know anything about it, and I did not want to hear him any more. During my sickness I thought I saw my grave dug; but I did not fear to trust Jesus, for I believed he would do right by me, and I was not afraid to die. At times I can rejoice over that spell of sickness, for all pride and self-aggrandizement was taken out of me. In that part of my experience there could hardly be any hypocrisy. This sickness, or the most of it, was in March, 1865. In August, 1867, we went to a Primitive or Old School Baptist meeting at Providence Church, Hancock County, Illinois. Elder Thomas Jones preached, and in his sermon he told of the travel of the christian. He told my mind better than I could tell it. Just before he closed his sermon he told the people to examine themselves. With me it was done in a moment. I saw more in one moment than I had seen in all my life before. My soul cried, "It is enough." That weight of trouble was gone (for I can call it nothing else), and joy was in its place—a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and that will never fade. I was taken out of that dark place, and placed on the Rock Christ Jesus, and a new song was put in my mouth, even praise to the most high God. It was done at an unexpected time with me, and in an unexpected way. We had gone to meeting as usual that day. I think I had tried every way that I could think of, and every way that I had heard of, to get religion, and had failed entirely; but when God's time came, the great Physician undertook my case and healed me in one moment, if I am not mistaken.

Now in regard to my baptism. When we got to the water's edge, I felt my unworthiness; but about the time that Elder Ramey started with me into the water I became calm,

and while I was beneath the surface it was the second happy moment. I was sorry that brother Ramey raised me so soon to the surface, for it was the sweetest moment of my life, and it seemed to me that I would like to stay there longer.

I have had my ups and downs, sometimes being carried to the mountain's top, when I could wish that everybody was like me, with the exception of this body. At other times I am away down in the valley, and crying, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this bondage of sin? Thus my life rolls on, and I am in my fifty-sixth year.

Well, this letter is much longer than I expected, and is imperfect, like the writer. When you read this, if you think it worthy a place in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and it will not crowd out better matter, send it on. If not, throw it into the fire, and all will be right with me.

Your unworthy brother in hope of eternal life,

S. B. DODD.

CONOVER, Ohio, Jan. 10, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I received a letter some time since from my cousin. At my request he gave me an account of his experience and call to the ministry, and by his permission I send it to you for publication, if you think proper.

Your sister in hope,

REBECCA M. CRAFT.

BENTLY, Ill., Oct. 25, 1887.

MRS. REBECCA M. CRAFT—DEAR COUSIN, AND SISTER IN THE LORD:

—By request of you and my mother I will for the first time in my life pen you a few lines of what I sometimes call my experience of grace, which is the ground of my hope of eternal life. I hope you will bear with my imperfections, of which I feel so full.

In the first place I will say that I am a sinner, partaker of condemnation in my federal head, Adam; but I never had a knowledge of it until 1883, when it pleased the Lord to let me see myself a wretch so vile, and then to know that I was an object of his eternal love. I thought I had never been such a terrible sinner before this time. I had been brought up by good, pious parents, until my father died, leaving mother a large family to look after. To make it lighter on her, I thought I would do for myself, though but a little boy. For a few years I worked by the month, and then concluded to go to Iowa. I remained there about three years. The last year I was there, which was 1883, I worked with my brother-in-law. During that summer, in the month of June, I was plowing corn one day, when, as it appears to me now, I fell into a trance. When I was aroused, I found myself weeping and crying on account of my sins. I thought I had not only transgressed the law of God, but of my parents also. My sins like mountains stood before me. O how terrible was my condi-

tion. I almost forgot to sleep, because my trouble was so deep. The fall of the year came, and I was still in trouble. In that neighborhood were a great many "holiness people," so-called. I would go and hear them talk, but got no comfort, for they had never been troubled as I was. I thought I would go farther west, seek rough company, and soon forget my sorrow. But ah! what a mistake. After a few days it came back to me more severe than ever before. O what a wretched month I passed. I would have given ten thousand worlds like this to have stood with christians, but could not. Finally I thought I would give myself over to licentiousness, and turned back to my old amusement of dancing; but the pleasure of that was not for me; it had vanished. Then I thought I would go to the mountains; but a little while before I was ready to start, it came into my mind to go back to Iowa. I went, and my trouble somewhat subsided for awhile. Then it came back to me more severe than ever, and the Lord only knows what I passed through for about one week. There was a Missionary Baptist meeting going on at that time in the vicinity, and I attended it. They wanted me to go to the "mourners' bench." I did not believe in that, but thought if I could benefit anybody in this world I would do so, and I went; but my load was greater than before. I wept because I could not weep. My heart was hard as stone. I felt that I was ready to perish.

"While to the law I trembling fled,  
It poured its curses on my head."

Then I gave up all for lost, and these words fell from my lips, "Lord, take me. It is all I can do." That moment I felt that Jesus was my Savior and my God. My heart was made free from that load it had groaned under so long, like a cart under many sheaves. I ran home, praising my God, to tell it to my sister and family. I wanted to tell to sinners what a dear Savior I had found. But the next morning Satan appeared to me, saying, "You have deceived yourself: it is all false." I prayed earnestly for knowledge, and I believe the Lord granted my prayer. I spent many happy days in sweet meditation, feeling that I had a duty to perform. I immediately joined the Missionary Baptists. I was like a young bird in its nest. There may be a poisonous serpent feeding it upon deadly poison, and it will open its mouth and drink it down. I remained with the Missionaries nearly eight months. During the time I stayed with this people (and after I went to Missouri) there seemed to be something pressing my mind, and it grew worse. I concluded it was a lack of duty, so I established the rule of family prayer, and kept it up. But my trouble was getting worse instead of better. I began to read the Bible, when the force of the words fastened upon

me, "Go stand in the temple, and speak all the words of this life." I said, "O Lord, thou knowest I am slow of speech and of a stammering tongue. It cannot mean me." I determined not to enter into such a field as this. I spent most of my time reading the Scriptures. I spent days, weeks and months in this condition, for I could not work. One night I was reading Paul's letter to the Corinthians, and in the latter clause of the first chapter of First Corinthians he gave me to understand that God works in his own way. I went to bed, feeling my great unworthiness. After rolling about awhile, I fell asleep. I dreamed that I was carried up into heaven, and was in the presence of Jesus. Then there was a space of darkness, and when I came to the light I was on earth again. A great multitude were around me, and I was telling them what I had heard of Jesus in heaven. I awoke in the morning, thinking of my dream. My mind was still sorely pressed to go and stand in the temple and preach all the words of this life. "O my unworthiness and my unfitness!" I would cry continually. Then the words of the apostle would come to me, that God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the mighty. This gave me some comfort. The church took up my case and liberated me. I began to preach among the Missionaries, but soon saw plainly that I could not preach their doctrine and preach the truth. So it was presented to me that I could preach a lie and have the applause of the world, or preach the truth and have the scorn of men. When I preached, they would shake their heads at me, and talked to me; but I would preach the more. I did not want to be an Old Baptist. I soon went to Kansas, and there found some Old Baptists. I attended their meetings, and saw plainly that they were the people of God; but it made me feel bad. I then wanted to be one, but thought they would not want such a one as I was. While listening to two brethren talking one day, they described my condition. I could stand it no longer, and told them so. They began to talk to me, and then there was rejoicing. They told me to come and go with them. I thought they were too good for such a poor wretch as I was to be with. One month from that day I went to the church and told them a part of what I have now written you. I was received, and baptized the next day. I am still trying to preach, and have made a great many vows that I would quit, but the end has not yet come. I have a good many calls, and try to fill as many as I can. Surely I know what trouble is.

Now, dear sister, I have written to you what I call my experience. If I have found a place in your heart, remember me at the throne of divine grace, for I feel that I need the prayer of all God's people.

Surely I am a sinner still. I have written in as condensed a manner as possible. If I could see you, I could tell you more. I hope to hear from you soon.

As ever, your unworthy brother,  
L. E. FRAZEE.

NEWPORT, N. C., June 19, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Many of the brethren and sisters with whom I met on my late tour requested me to write and let them know how I got along; and now I undertake to comply, by your permission, by dropping all of them a few words through the SIGNS. And, first, I wish to tell some of my feelings before I left home. My impression to go north came on me about the middle of last December, and I felt that I could not attempt such a thing, from several reasons. First, I felt that if I was needed anywhere in the world it was here at home; for I try in my weak way to serve four churches; and if I went north I felt that they would be compelled to do without preaching until I came back, and for this reason I felt that I ought to remain at home. Secondly, I felt too small to go so far from home, and especially among brethren whom I looked upon as being giants in the house of the Lord. And my last and greatest reason was, that I was not at all fit to go off anywhere to preach, for I have often felt that the brethren here would not be put off with me if there was anybody else to preach for them. But after all these things, the impression continued with me, until I wished that I could get down sick; then I would have a lawful excuse not to go. But as the time drew near, my desire became so great that I felt willing to take my valise and walk the whole trip. So you see I was much crossed, and kept in a great strait to know what to do. Now I believe that the good Lord led me, and on the twenty-sixth day of April I took leave of my family and went to fill some appointments in North Carolina, not knowing where I was to go afterwards; but I feel that the Lord directed my way, and I reached the three days meeting at Broad Run, Md., which was to me a very good meeting. I thought there that I had never enjoyed a meeting any better, and the acquaintance of the brethren and sisters there was very pleasant to me. After this I attended four associations, the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River and Warwick, all of which were very good meetings to me. Also the Sunday appointments I enjoyed very much, and was much comforted at every place. But the best of all the meetings was the covenant meeting at Middletown, N. Y., on Saturday afternoon, after the Warwick Association. That meeting will be a bright spot in my memory while my mind lasts. I feel like saying to the brethren who are engaged in those meetings, Go on in the good work; for I believe

that they are spiritual conferences indeed, in which the Lord is graciously manifested in the hearts of his children. Each one exchanges his or her talent with the rest, and a growth in grace is the result, which is manifested. To be short, the whole tour was one of great joy to me. Of course I had some dark hours, but these do not compete with the joys which I felt. The brethren preached much about the times of darkness through which they had passed, and that was much comfort to me; for when I look back over my experience, I see more sorrow than joy, more darkness than light. But what gives me comfort is that the good Lord has not forsaken me even in darkness, yea, even in transgression. I feel to be a living witness to the words, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" and, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Eliphaz, the Temanite, in speaking to Job (Job v. 19), says, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." I have never felt at liberty to quote that promise as the promise of the Lord, for it is not broad enough. The Lord's promises are full, and to his people they have no limit, only, "I will" and "you shall." That is where our salvation stands, and the devil cannot move it by all the troubles and afflictions that he is capable of bringing on us; for even he can go no further than our Father please. His boundaries are fixed, and he must come up to them, but he cannot go any further, whether it is in the destruction of the wicked, or in the affliction of the righteous. God sees us in all our affliction, and has provided a way for our escape, and will surely bring us in that way which he has provided. Then who shall hinder our escape? These things are much comfort to me when I can look on this side; but sometimes, and indeed a great deal of the time, the other side is toward me, and I cannot see this side. Then it is that I am cast down and almost ready to despair of all hope. I generally try to look on the bright side of everything, but sometimes it seems so dark that there appears to be no light side at all to me, and then I mourn over my wretchedness. Thus I am made to see and know that if I am not freely justified in Christ, for all that is past, and for the present, and for all that is to come, I am surely gone, lost to all eternity. I find the saying of the psalmist to be true in my case, "The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart. There is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity he found to be hateful."—Psa. xxxvi. 12. The teaching of my own carnal nature proves to me the truth of this language, and because of this I am often made to mourn. I think the furthest that I have ever been in that direction since I have had a

hope in the Lord was during the week before my ordination, when I was carried so far that I really doubted the existence of God. I was there made to see that I was nothing in myself but an infidel, and afterwards I saw that I was nothing but a passing shadow that was without life or substance. Since that time I have never doubted the existence of God, but have been led through many dark places and sore trials, and the devil has often tempted me to withdraw my name from the church; but, thank the Lord, he has never succeeded yet, and I am yet in fellowship with the brethren.

But I am here reminded that I must bring this imperfect letter to a close. I left Middletown on the morning of June 11th, and left Jersey City at 9:15 p. m. the same day, and reached my home on the 12th, at 10:40 p. m., and found my family all in good health, and at the depot awaiting my arrival. I can never thank the Lord enough for his goodness to me, for all my life he has been gracious to me, and spared my unprofitable life, and given me grace to bear me up in every time of need. I truly feel that he is my shield and my protector, and will be even unto the end.

We had a good meeting on last Saturday and Sunday. All were in peace, and one was received and baptized. He came out of Babylon, and while there he lived on Methodist Avenue, that John Wesley laid out over one hundred years ago.

Dear brethren and sisters, pray for me. I hope the goodness and mercy of God will continue with you, and enable you all to live in the faith that was once delivered to the saints.

I remain your brother in the affliction of the gospel,

L. H. HARDY.

BLANCHESTER, Clinton Co., Ohio.

BROTHER DURAND:—After the death of my dear mother, Kezia Hutchinson, I found among her papers the inclosed letter addressed to you. It has been written a number of years, and is now read for the first time. She delighted in reading the messages of christian love contained in the SIGNS, especially those written by yourself. This letter, you will perceive, was based upon one of your communications. For the sake of her many friends, I would like to see it in our family paper, if you think best.

You will see, brother Durand, that the letter was left unfinished. Doubtless she intended, when she laid it aside, to finish it. I found it in scraps among her papers, and copied it as best I could. I know it will be precious indeed to those who loved her best. Four weeks ago yesterday, surrounded by loving friends, together with weeping husband and children, her gentle spirit, which endeared her to all, left its tenement of clay, and returned to the

God who gave it. This world seems lone indeed without our mother's love and counsel; but the Lord has been merciful indeed, and spared her to us a long time. Now in his wonderful love, and for an all-wise purpose, he has called home his own, his child, whom he only loaned to us: ours for a short time, but his through all eternity. May we ever bow submissive to his will, acknowledging his superior love and power, and recognize his ability to heal the wound which he in love and mercy didst inflict.

With much love, and a desire for your prayers and sympathy, I am yours in deep affliction,

IDA McADAMS.

DEAR BROTHER DURAND:—Yesterday I picked up an old number of the SIGNS, dated May 15th, 1870. While reading the many precious communications, I was deeply impressed with one from you, which commenced thus, "Being kept from attending my appointments last Saturday and Sunday, by ill health, I thought to spend some of my time writing about spiritual things; but that I could not do, for the fire would not burn. It is terrible to feel sick in body, and cold and lifeless in soul, at the same time. O if I could only feel that warmth and liveliness of spirit, that sweet enjoyment of heavenly things, all the time, which I felt when I first received my hope, and which I have experienced at times since; but I do not. On the contrary, I walk much in darkness, and have to mourn on account of the coldness and hardness and worldliness of my heart." When I read the clause, "the fire would not burn," I thought, Can it be that one of God's able ministers could feel thus? Why, these are my feelings, and this is the reason why I grope so much in darkness. The fire will not burn. If power was given unworthy me to fan the fire into a flame, I would never live in darkness, but would soar far above the vanities of earth, and ever live in the sunshine of the sweet smiles of my blessed Savior, where no earthly temptations could reach me. But on the contrary, I am always sinning. Sin is ever present, and "how to perform that which is good I find not." I am always doing that which I hate, and never doing the things I hope I love. Or, if I do have a comfortable season of rejoicing, it seems even then that "sin is mixed with all I do."

"You that love the Lord indeed, Tell me, is it thus with you?"

Yes, my brother, you have already said it was so with you. But "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." When I read the many communications in the SIGNS, which are so precious to me, I feel that I can take courage. My soul goes out in love to the writers, and I feel a desire to take them by the hand, and exclaim with Ruth of old, Thy people are my

people, and thy God my God. In my youth I united with the Free-will Baptist church, and lived as they did, eating my own bread and wearing my own apparel. I was so blind as to pity my dear old father, because he did not know any better than to believe the Old School Baptist doctrine, which I then thought the most unreasonable. But if it ever pleased the blessed Lord to take away my heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, which I sometimes hope he did, how differently I viewed the once despised people. If it was the Lord that showed me my lost condition, and ground my self-righteousness to powder, I am safe. But my fear is that the Lord had no part nor lot in the matter, and that it is all my own imagination. But there is one thing I do know, that "whereas I was once blind, now I see." And I never yet have been in such gross darkness that I could not say, I love the brethren. In my childhood and early youth I was a reader of the Bible, not from love, for it was a sealed book to me then; but from a sense of duty I thought I owed my parents, who were Old School Baptists, and I thought them very good people; for as yet I had not become so wise as to pity them. From my earliest recollection I had serious thoughts of death, which I greatly feared, but tried to calm myself into the belief that when I grew older I would become a christian, and all would be well. But, my dear brother, how differently I was led, as I hope, by the just and holy God. And now, with all my doubts and fears, and all the struggles and sorrows of this mortal life, there is one time in memory which no earthly power can erase, when I heard, or hope I heard, my Savior, in a sweet, gentle voice speak, "Peace, be not afraid, it is I."

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed, How sweet their memory still."

Then I could sing, "The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge. O clap your hands, all ye people: shout unto God with the voice of triumph: sing praises unto God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King: sing praises." Then it was, my brother, that we "took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." When the things of the kingdom occupy our thoughts, what peace and comfort we feel, though it may be in adversity.

I went to-day to hear brother Beeman. I think him one of the Lord's ablest servants. He shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God. Yet he is very respectful toward all with whom he meets, and is well respected at home, and beloved by those who know him best, which speaks well for any one. I have known him since my earliest recollection, and have lived a neighbor to him most of my life.

Six years ago I laid my dear husband under the cold sod, and was left to battle with a cold, unfeeling

world. Many have been my troubles and trials since then; not as regards earthly matters, for in that respect I have been blessed. But O the lonely days and nights I have spent. Nights when my family were slumbering peacefully around me, I have experienced groanings which could not be uttered. But sometimes I felt the sweet presence of the loving Father, which gave me courage to trust him, and instilled a love so strong that I could not find language sufficiently to praise his great and holy name. When the things of the kingdom occupy the thoughts, what peace and comfort the christian feels, though it may be in adversity and deep affliction.

KEZIA HUTCHINSON.  
See obituary on page 167.

LEBANON, Ohio, April 23, 1888.

ELDER BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—The time is at hand to renew my subscription to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I feel that I derive much spiritual profit and comfort from reading many of the well written and spiritual articles contributed to the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the articles written by brethren who are workmen, rightly dividing the word of truth. How delightful and instructive it is to the mind to be able to see the beauty and harmony of the teaching of the Lord as seen and expounded by holy men of old as they were moved to write by the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of God our Savior is one complete chain, perfect as God is perfect; and I feel that many of the contributors to the SIGNS are men whom God has endued with spiritual discernment to show the beauty and excellency of that doctrine, very much to my comfort and edification; that doctrine the promulgation of which brought the followers of the Lord, in the days of his flesh, to bonds and imprisonment, and finally to death. The world of professors of to-day reject that doctrine, and show their contempt for it; but to those who have the mind of Christ, who have been heaven-born and heaven-taught, it is their glory and the comfort of their hearts. In this world of confusion, and where religious error so much abounds, how necessary it is for those who are called by God to preach the everlasting gospel, to shun not to declare the whole counsel of God. The Lord has not authorized any man to revise or alter his truth, as revealed to his people by his Holy Spirit, to please worldly professors, who despise that gospel of the grace of God. Jesus told his apostles, when he sent them out, to teach his disciples to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. So they were not to deviate one particle from the teaching of Christ. But we well know such adherence to the divine command will bring down upon the faithful witness for truth the indignation and contempt of the world;

but none of these things should move the faithful minister of Jesus Christ to cease to declare that whole counsel of God. I, for one, who hope and trust I am a member of the mystical body of Christ, and a member of the visible church, have no apology to offer for God's truth. I desire to love and believe his sacred truth, feeling that he is God over all, blessed forevermore. I rejoice that he has given me the spirit to love his truth, to bow to his authority, and not question his right to do his will with his own. At one time in the ministry of the Lord, when he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum, some of his disciples murmured at his teaching, and said, "This is a hard saying: who can hear it?" But it is my desire not to depart from any of the teachings of my Lord, but to be enabled by grace divine to love his truth and reverence his great and adorable name, who called me, as I trust, into the fellowship of that gospel; who gave me to see my sinful condition and utter helplessness to bring myself into a justified state with himself; he also, as I humbly hope, showed me the cross of Calvary, the sin-atonement Lamb of God, the fountain of his precious blood, as my only cure for the dreadful malady of sin, which was, as I thought, soon to sink me down to eternal night. Ever since that holy hour of the revelation of his grace to me, I have loved to sing and talk of his matchless love, of his omnipotent power, of his saving grace, that was so freely bestowed upon the people of his choice before the world began. The manifestation of his love to his people here in this world is only what existed eternally with himself. What gratitude flows forth from my poor heart sometimes when I contemplate his everlasting love to his people. There is no change in his love for his children. When his church, his bride, fell in Adam, he took not his love from her, but from everlasting had provided a Mediator, a days-man, to stand between offended justice and his fallen people. So, in the time appointed, he came into the world to enter upon his great mission of saving his people from their sins. The apostle says, in the second chapter of Hebrews, that the children being partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. How glorious the plan, how amazing the love of God to his fallen church. That love, as we said before, sent Jesus into the world, sent him to the cross, sent him to the grave, all for the purpose of rescuing his bride from him that had the power of death; and when he went down into death, he brought his bride up with him from the dark chambers of death in sin. So he could say to his Father, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." And when

the Spirit quickens them in divine life, and reveals to them that they are the sons of God, they cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; so that when we are made to realize our sonship, how sweet the name of our Father God is to us. The poet sings,

"My God, my Father, blissful name!  
O may I call thee mine?  
May I with sweet assurance claim  
A portion so divine?"

And I, a poor sinner saved by the grace of my once suffering and now exalted Savior, as I hope, desire to go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach; and whatever of calumny or contempt is poured out upon me for my love of and my adherence to the glorious doctrine of God's eternal love to his people, and his everlasting choice of them in Christ their head, I desire to bear it cheerfully, and be made to feel as those eminent servants of God, Peter and his co-laborers, to rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer shame for his dear name's sake. I realize how little I know of the truth of God; but what I trust has been revealed unto me, I love; and I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. I hope I was made to love it years ago; and as years go past over my head, and the shadows of life lengthen out, I feel to lean upon the strong arm of my Father God, feeling his love and protecting care over me, unworthy as I am of that love. May we, dear brethren and sisters, love and adore the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. What little God has revealed to me of his divine character causes me to have a very exalted idea of the character of the eternal God, who is above all, and rules over all his creation, seated on his throne in his uncreated glory, with none to question his right or his power to do with his creation as he pleases. To such a God I bow, realizing that whatever he does is right; and my hope is that one day, when the troubles and afflictions of this world are ended, I shall be permitted to see him as he is, with open face, and bow at his feet, and crown him Lord of all. Amen.

Yours in gospel bonds,

E. S. CULY.

DUNKERTON, Iowa, July, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—About two years have elapsed since I last made the attempt to address the dear saints through the columns of the SIGNS. Many have been the urgent requests by the brethren of late that I should write; and having promised Elder Hanover, of Ohio, at our association in June, to do so, I now try in much weakness to attempt it. Realizing the importance (in a small degree at least) of handling the written word of God, or any portion of it, often checks me when I think of penning

my thoughts on it for the scrutiny of some, and for the criticism of others. But if I can have the Spirit of the Master to instruct the mind and guide the pen, I care not for thousands of critics. Let us turn our minds to a portion of God's word found in Hebrews vi. 19, 20, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." It would be well to examine at the beginning what our hope is grounded upon. Nearly every one has some kind of a hope erected on some basis. Is our hope resting on our good deeds, our supposed inherent goodness, our morality, or any other earthly prop? If so, dear reader, let me inform you it is on shifting sands, insecure ground, and is dangerous. But do we hear some poor, trembling child of God saying, I sometimes hope I have a hope? Ah, if so, I claim you as my brother, for much of the time I can get no farther than that, and that seems like hoping against hope. And it is recorded for the comfort and encouragement of God's people, "But hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" So, my brethren, all through this earthly pilgrimage we find we have to walk by faith, and not by sight. Hope is spoken of, in the Scripture under consideration, under the figure of an anchor, both sure and steadfast. Ah, it seems to me that those who have such an anchor, such a stronghold, such a firm cord, can never be carried about by every wind of doctrine, never be taken up with a theoretical religion, but will ever cling close to that hope. Some call it a "little hope," but, brethren, you who have such a hope, such an anchor, never call it little. No; it is big with immortality, and reaches beyond the shores of time and sense. It is (to use a figure) as though one end was attached to the soul, and the other into the climes of immortal glory. And so strong, so firm and steadfast that it holds the vessel securely; and though the rude billows and turbulent waves of this life may toss it about, and at times cover it, and seem to threaten to engulf it, yet ever held by that sure and steadfast anchor, it can never be destroyed, but will ever be drawing the soul and the desires of the soul heavenward. How often, dear brethren and sisters, with Peter we conclude that all is lost, that our faith has been vain and our hope groundless, and we say, "I go fishing." O I often think I can realize how he felt. Jesus had been with them, and they believed him to be the Savior. But they had seen wicked men take him, and he made no effort to resist them. They had seen him crucified and buried, and now had turned to their worldly occupations, giving up all for lost. But after

Peter had seen him as his risen Savior, had been converted from his self-reliance, had received the command, "Feed my sheep," then he was qualified to fulfill the mission given him by his Master, "Strengthen thy brethren." And he could then break out in the soul-cheering words, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," &c.

I have just commenced to touch on the subject, but time and space will not admit of my going farther into it. There is a transcendent beauty and glory surrounding a subject so sublime, and I leave it for stronger minds and more gifted pens. To you who have asked the cause of my silence, I wish to say that leanness of mind and lack of time are the only reasons. I love to hear from you, and to read your writings. With love to all who love our Lord in sincerity and truth, I am your sister in hope,

S. A. GARRETT (*nee* BLAKE).

BURDETT, N. Y., March 4, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been thinking for a long time of penning a few thoughts for publication in the SIGNS. I have read the paper all my life, at least as long as I have read any paper. It is just as precious and instructive as ever, and sometimes I think it is more so. I have never begrudged the cost of it. I do not see how any Old School Baptist can afford to be without it. I have not always agreed with every word it contained, and it may not be supposed that all will agree with what I write, say or do; for sometimes it is more than I can very well put up with, to get along with myself. But I have had very precious seasons with the people of God. Yes, dear brethren, just now if I could be in the company of the dear saints, to express the emotions of my soul, the inexpressible peace that flows so abundantly, to rejoice with those that rejoice, to weep with those that weep, to sit in the assembly of the Most High and hear his servants proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ, to join in singing anthems of praise, I would not attempt to scribble on paper these imperfect thoughts. I have of late been deprived of hearing preaching. Elder Bogardus took up one appointment, and it has seemed a long time to wait for the coming of Elder Vail on the third Sunday of this month. I always look forward to the appointments of the church with the hope that they will add to my spiritual comfort and happiness. Many (yes, I may say all) that were members when I joined have gone to that rest that remains to the people of God, or else have moved away. Yet I have looked, hoped and prayed for the upbuilding of the Burdett Church, as well as all the churches scattered over the world. The Scriptures in-

form us that the Lord will leave in the midst an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. That is good. No hammering or tinkering is allowed. God has fixed and fashioned all things after the counsel of his own will. That will has never been changed. I am glad it is so. In that will we are made heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. This is glorious in the extreme. These things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. That suits my case. I have at times felt that I would like to grow. I do sometimes feel strong in the Lord. Yes, I have sometimes felt to say, "Praise the Lord, and forget not all his benefits." There is a refuge for the saints. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." O do I love him? I sometimes have to search for the evidence.

"Other refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

Who shall separate us from the love of God? Nothing shall separate us, dear brethren. And if we have the love of God in us, how can we separate ourselves from our brethren? What say the Scriptures? "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." We are not our own, but are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus. His blood cleanses us from all sin. We are justified and sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called. Now we are told to make our calling and election sure. The Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

But, dear brethren and sisters, what I started out to do was to express my fellowship for all who love our God, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Dear brethren and sisters, write on. We need not be afraid of our brethren. Our Savior has said, "Marvel not if the world hate you." "It hated me before it hated you." "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."

I must stop writing; although I feel that I have hardly begun. Bear with me, dear brethren, and pray for me when it is well with you. My soul wishes Mount Zion well.

From your unworthy brother in Christ, if one at all,

H. B. ELLIOTT.

WOODSONVILLE, Ky., Jan. 19, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The first number of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for 1888 has taken its place around my family hearth, after an absence of over twenty-five years, and with it fresh memories of by-

gone days, when its old editor, with many others of the blessed servants of God, lived; but they are now called home to receive their reward, and to be with Jesus, their blessed Lord. Others are left; not to fill their places, for they were filled as undershepherds or teachers, instructors and comforters of the children of God, not through their own strength and wisdom, but through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has ascended into heaven, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him.

Times have changed, and many sorrows, trials, afflictions and temptations have fallen to the lot of those left, but perhaps no greater than to those who are gone. But there is no occasion for murmurings, for the greater the cross the greater the crown; the hotter the fire the brighter the gold. When that terrible war came upon and left us desolate, it cut off the old family paper. Since then I have wandered (not in body) from west to east, from east to south, to see what I could learn, and to the holy Scriptures, to compare the difference between the teaching of God and the teachings of men. I feel at times that I have realized the exceeding sinfulness of sin at an early day, and the glory of God in my condemnation, and also the greater glory of our most merciful God in the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ, my Lord and my God. Yet though this be so, it seems my foot would have slipped and I fallen into the mire, had it not been for the rod of my Master, which yields fruit, as did Aaron's rod, and the many mercies and the great goodness of our God in preserving my unprofitable life time and again, through dangers seen and unseen, when life was worth only a sparrow's life, and also his goodness in giving me to understand of some Scriptures, to the joy and gladness of my poor soul.

A. L. WOODSON.

TODDVILLE, Iowa, May 19, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As my husband is sending on his remittance for our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I will write a few lines, which, if you see fit, you may publish, as his many friends whom he met while on a visit in Indiana nearly a year ago, perhaps, would like to hear of his welfare. His health was better after he came home, and in the former part of the winter, than it had been in a long time. In the latter part of the winter and spring his old disease, rheumatism, seized him again, and this spring it has become inflammatory in form, and he has been almost helpless for nearly two months. His chief pleasure now is in talking of the goodness and wisdom of the all-wise God, who rules all things according to his own purpose and power. Harvey never seems more contented than when reading the good communications in the SIGNS.

It is the only paper he has taken for over thirty-five years, I think. As his body grows feeble, his mind seems to be more clear on portions of Scripture (that we have talked about in former years) than I ever knew it before. It seems to soar above and beyond everything of an earthly nature. As for myself, everything looks dark and obscure. May God give me grace to enable me to bear patiently whatever trials are before me. May he send choice blessings and encouragements to cheer you, dear brethren, and strengthen you in your arduous duties as editors, is the prayer of one who is the least of all saints, if one at all. I wish my dear correspondents who may see this, and those particularly to whom I have not written lately, will not forget me, as I have but little time to write. May we be permitted to meet in that upper and better Bethel, where sorrow and parting never come, is the desire of my poor heart.

MARTHA A. GOTT.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., March 4, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find two dollars, my subscription for the SIGNS. It is all the preaching we receive excepting when Elder Thomas gives us a few encouraging words, which is only occasional. I feel at times that I should starve to death if it were not for the food the SIGNS contains. We are told, "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;" and as I am entirely dependent upon and hoping in that mercy, I feel that I may claim the promise that he will "deliver their soul from [spiritual] death, and keep them alive in famine." My constant and fervent prayer is that he will at least keep me alive at this time, when my poor soul hungers and thirsts for the preaching and teaching of his blessed truth. When I begin to grow weak and cold, and fear the tiny little sparks of love and light have almost gone out, and that the shadow of death is nearly upon me, some encouraging word found in our family paper, or perhaps a sermon from Elder Thomas, fans it back to life again, and I grow warm and live. He keeps me "alive in time of famine." O! if in his mercy, (the mercy in which I hope), he will but keep me alive by occasionally dropping to me a crumb, I shall be content, who am so unworthy to receive but a smile from his guileless lips, or to touch the hem of his garment.

May he spare you long, dear brethren, to spread his comforting truth abroad, is the desire of your unworthy sister in Christ.

M. A. JONES.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., JULY 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF  
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

A CROWN OF GLORY AND A DI-  
ADEM OF BEAUTY.

"In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate."—Isa. xxviii. 5, 6.

In the proclamation of the unspeakable mystery of the grace of God which bringeth salvation, the wisdom of the Spirit of inspiration has brought into service the most appropriate and expressive illustrations which are to be drawn from the material universe. Yet all these very striking figures fall infinitely short of describing the glorious reality of that mystery as it is revealed in the experience of those who are led by the Spirit into all the knowledge of divine grace. It is in this way that God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, while by revelation he has been pleased to show unto babes the manifestation of his wonderful works of goodness and mercy to the children of men. All the attainments of science can never so much as approach unto this unsearchable secret of our God. It must forever remain the exclusive work of the Holy Spirit to take of these things of Jesus, and to show them unto the blessed subjects of the electing love of God. The declarations of prophecy are not addressed to the natural understanding of man, nor are they intended for the instruction of the children of men in regard to the things of earth. The Scriptures testify of Jesus, and that testimony is the spirit of prophecy. The language of this text is of interest to the saints in all ages of time only as it is applied in their experience as bearing witness to the same salvations which they have received in their personal deliverance from their sins.

"In that day." The frequent recurrence of this specific form of expression throughout the prophetic records, clearly shows that the Spirit of Christ in the prophets continually declared the certain coming of that more glorious display of divine power and love which was fulfilled only when our Lord Jesus arose from the dead in all the majestic life which he ever had with the Father before the world was. It will not harmonize with the inspired description of the day here spoken of to understand it as referring to one special day of the week in distinction from the other six days; nor yet can it be confined to any portion of natural time as indicating that one day is more highly favored than an-

other. In the language of the prophecy it was night all the time from the entrance of sin into the world to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead. In that triumphant exhibition of his victory over death and sin, life and immortality were brought to light through the gospel. The night of legal and prophetic shadows and symbols gave place to the great day of the Lord in which all those types were fulfilled. This was represented in the natural creation. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." At the command of God light shone out of darkness. This accords with the experience of all who are called by the word of the Lord from the night of sin, and translated into the marvelous light of the kingdom of our Lord and Savior. As "the evening and the morning were the first day," so in every case when a sinner is brought to the knowledge of the truth, his first discovery is that darkness covers all the earth where he finds himself. He sees the justice of his condemnation before he can hope in the salvation which is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. Under that consciousness of sin the night is so intense that the darkness is like that which prevailed in Egypt, "Even darkness which may be felt."—Ex. x. 21. But the word of the Lord commands the light to shine out of that darkness, and the day is bright with the display of the righteousness which is in our Lord Jesus. The revelation of this light is the manifestation of that day which is the antitype of all the sabbatic days of the prophetic and legal dispensation. "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Psa. cxviii. 24. As the natural day is made by the rising of the natural sun, so this heavenly day is made by the rising of the Sun of righteousness, at whose coming the shadows flee away, and in whose presence there is fullness of joy. There is no room for doubt that this is the day specified in the text. As prophesied by Malachi, this great day shall burn as an oven, and the glorious beauty of "the crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim," shall be trodden under feet as foretold in the first verse of this chapter. The Lord does not leave his ransomed people to claim that they have anything in themselves wherein to trust. They must know that all their righteousnesses are but as filthy rags, before the Lord is revealed as their perfect justification. So, in its application to the whole church of the redeemed, they could not see the day of the visible appearing of the risen Lord of life, until they had been delivered from all reliance upon that righteousness which is by the works of the law of a carnal commandment. While that veil of trust in legal works remains upon the heart of a

subject of salvation, he cannot see the full radiance of the day to which our text refers. Such a saint remains in bondage even until now.

The wonderful things which are declared as determined for manifestation "in that day" are never announced as contingent upon any works of creatures to be performed as the condition on which the Lord will do the good to his chosen people. It is always, as in the text, a positive announcement of what the Lord will do. "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people." A crown indicates royal power and dominion as belonging to the possessor of it. This is the sense in which it is to be understood in this expression. No earthly monarch ever wore such a crown of glory as this which is the heritage of every one of the residue of the people whose God is the Lord. The crowns worn by temporal kings are but the badges which indicate their temporal authority. As they are attained by victories of earth, so they must pass away with all earthly things. The "crown of glory" which is the heritage of "the residue of his people," is not affected by the destroying touch of time. As the Lord of hosts is himself their crown it must be eternal as himself. By this everlasting assurance they are comforted in all their tribulations with the certainty of their final victory over all the enemies and opposition which they must encounter in their weary warfare here in the body of this death. Not only is the Lord of hosts the power by which the ultimate triumph of the residue of his people is wrought, and their strong tower of safety in the day of trouble; but he is also the glory by which they are adorned as with a diadem of heavenly beauty. This is not visible to the natural eye, neither has its wonderful glory entered the heart of man. As that day is known only by revelation of the Spirit of God, so the glorious things which he has reserved for them that love him are hidden from the research of created intelligence. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. When the Lord by his Spirit dwells in his redeemed people, thus sealing them as his peculiar choice, they are indeed manifested as wearing "a crown of glory," and every ray of that luster which shines in their "diadem of beauty," glows with the divine perfection of the Lord of hosts, who dwells in "the residue of his people." "For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her (Jerusalem) a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her."—Zech. ii. 5. This is the supreme majesty faintly described in our text

under the similitude of a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty, which the Lord of hosts shall be unto the residue of his people; but it must not be forgotten that this triumphant glory is not the reward of their watchfulness and valor. The Lord of hosts gives the victory to the residue or remnant of his people when they are cut off from all dependence upon their own strength. They never receive it until they have found themselves destitute of resources and utterly "without strength." So long as they can trust in their own righteousness and diligence they never gain the crown of triumph. In every case it is still true as it was with Paul that they must find the strength of the Lord made perfect only in their own weakness.

"And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment." He who sitteth in judgment in the throne of his glory is none other but the Lord Jesus, who is anointed in his official character as the supreme Judge of his people. The holy oil with which he is consecrated is the fullness of the Spirit of the Lord God. By this anointing he is qualified to judge the world in righteousness. He is exclusively called "the Lord, the righteous Judge."—2 Tim. iv. 8. It is in this manifestation of his divine character that he says, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek."—Isa. lxi. 1. Time and space would fail to describe the wonderful revelation of this perfect Judge. While he is thus anointed with the infinite power and wisdom of God, he is not revealed as being less than that God with whose holy Spirit he is anointed. In vision he was revealed to John as he that sat upon the white horse in heaven, who was called "Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." "His name is called the Word of God."—Rev. xix. 11, 13. In the record of the gospel John says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." In the throne of his glory he sitteth in judgment, and his sentence is the decision of the eternal God. We earnestly wish to be understood distinctly upon this point, as it is sometimes a source of much confusion when it is not carefully expressed in the very words of the Scripture. So far from denying the eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are sure that he is the only true God, and "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."—Col. ii. 8. Yet in his relation to his people he is described in the Scriptures as the Servant of God, and as being upheld by the hand of God.—Isa. xlii. 1. It is not required of finite creatures to explain the great mystery of this revelation. It must ever remain incomprehensible to those who seek to reduce

the things of the Spirit of God to the understanding of the natural man; for God has purposely hidden it, and that so effectually that it cannot even be sought by that mind which man has naturally. This is what Paul calls "the unsearchable riches of Christ."—Eph. iii. 8. As revealed in the experience of the saints, they are made to know the power of this glorious mystery, so that they can find rest in its certain truth; but they can know it only as the Spirit of truth is pleased to take of the things of Jesus and show unto them in their personal experience. They cannot explain how it is that Jesus is made sin for them while he is the very and eternal God; yet they could have no hope in the salvation which is revealed in him if they were not sure that he is the true God and eternal life.

The spirit of judgment by which he is qualified to sit in judgment is not dependent upon the knowledge which may be acquired by study, or received from the testimony of creatures. "He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."—Isa. xi. 3, 4. No other judge has the ability to determine with such unerring accuracy every point which can arise for his decision. The Lord of hosts is for a spirit of judgment exclusively unto him who is appointed to be the righteous Judge of quick and dead. It is included in the very foundation of the doctrine of the gospel that the judgment of this Holy One is eternal; therefore it cannot be dependent upon the action of creatures in time.—See Heb. vi. 2. By this divine Spirit of judgment he speaks in righteousness, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. xlv. 10. No creature can comprehend the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, which he has revealed in the unsearchable judgments of his infinite grace. "He giveth not account of any of his matters."—Job xxxiii. 13. Although mortals cannot comprehend the mysteries of his providence, the fact is established that "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works."—Psa. cxlv. 17. He only sitteth in judgment in the great congregation of his redeemed church. All decrees of councils or churches must be authorized by that Spirit of judgment which is in him alone, else they can have no authority in his kingdom. He walks in his saints and in the midst of his churches when they walk in the Spirit, so that every judgment rendered in obedience to his direction is inspired by

his own Spirit, and is his own decree. In his revealed word he ever sitteth in judgment till the end of time; and it is only when his children forsake his law, that any discord or confusion can invade the organized church. In the inspired Scriptures are contained express directions for the guidance of his people in every case that can arise for their decision. His Spirit is their teacher, who takes of those things of their Lord and shows to them the application of each word in the very hour when it is needed. This is attested in the personal experience of every one who has been brought low under a consciousness of the need of deliverance from the law of sin, which is ever warring in their members against the desire to walk in obedience to the commandments of the Lord.

"And for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate." The primary application of this clause of the text seems clearly to signify the inspired apostles and prophets, whose testimony is the power which meets every assault of the enemy, and in the strength of the Lord of hosts the battle is turned to the gate where just judgment is pronounced unto that victory which is already secured to all his people by the triumphant Redeemer. The Lord of hosts is the strength of the whole word of inspiration. But there is also a sense in which this comforting promise is applicable to all the subjects of that salvation which is in Christ Jesus. Although they cannot claim ability in themselves to resist the assaults of sin, yet they do "turn the battle to the gate" when they cry out of the depth of their distresses unto the Lord. This is the gate whence they receive the victory, for "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe."—Prov. xviii. 10. This gate signifies the praise of God in saving his people from their sins, and in satisfying the utmost demands of divine justice in that salvation.

While as declared in the text, "In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory" to "the residue of his people," it is written by the same prophet, for the comfort of Zion, "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God."—Isa. lxii. 3. Thus the declarative glory of God is displayed in the salvation of his people as much as they are blessed in the grace bestowed upon them; and consequently it is impossible that their salvation should fail without reproaching the glorious name of the Lord.

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

AT the commencement of the current volume we published a special rate to our subscribers at which they might procure and forward *new* subscribers until April 1st, 1888. Many have responded, and sent us in the

aggregate several hundred new names; but owing to the extremely severe weather throughout a large portion of the country, many have written us that they have not been able to get around among the brethren. We have therefore decided to extend the time, and will until further notice receive subscriptions for *new* subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

TWO NEW SUBSCRIBERS and four dollars we will send both papers one year, and also credit the old subscriber one year. For

FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS, sent all at one time, and seven dollars, we will send the five papers and credit the old subscriber one year.

Any whose subscription is already paid in advance can forward new subscribers at the rate of one dollar each for one year.

These terms apply to none but those who are subscribers. Any one whose name is not on our list, and who wishes to take advantage of these rates, can send two dollars for his own subscription, and one dollar each for all other *new* subscribers.

#### INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH.

WILL brother S. H. Durand give his views on Ecclesiastes ix. 14, 15, and oblige an old sinner who gets no preaching only through the SIGNS, which I would not do without for twice what it costs?

Yours in hope of eternal life,

D. A. McKEE.

#### CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please give notice through the SIGNS that I have changed my residence from Jersey, Walton Co., Georgia, to Rutledge, Morgan Co., Georgia, and desire my correspondents to address me at the latter place.

D. F. P. MONTGOMERY.

#### JUST RECEIVED.

WE have received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### PRICE REDUCED.

BROTHER J. B. Hardy, of Wellsford, Kiowa Co., Kan., has authorized us to publish a reduction in the price of the "Five Days Debate." For reduced prices and full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### "THE EDITORIALS."

#### FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### MARRIAGES.

IN Pittston, Maine, June 19th, 1888, at the residence of the bride's father, by Elder Hiram Campbell, Mr. James E. Hubbard, of North Jay, Maine, and Miss Jenne C. Moody, of Pittston, Maine.

#### OBITUARY NOTICES.

DIED—June 17th, 1888, sister **G. A. Stowell**, of Delphi, Onondaga Co., N. Y., aged sixty-three years and six months.

Her disease was rheumatism, from which she was a sufferer for several years, and most of the time was helpless, or nearly so. For thirty-eight days before she died she could take nothing into her stomach but a little cold water, and ate no solid food for fifty-one days. I am informed that she was resigned to the will of her heavenly Father—willing to go when called to his eternal home. She died in the triumphs of that faith which she had contended for so many years. She was a member of the Predestinarian Baptist Church of Delphi, New York, but how long I do not know. Mr. O. H. Stowell, her husband, did all that a companion could do for her comfort. She leaves her husband, one brother and two sisters, with other relatives, to mourn their loss, which we believe is her eternal gain. The writer of this notice spoke at the funeral, to a very large assembly of friends, from 2 Corinthians v. 1, 2.

I will copy a letter that she wrote me when she was first afflicted with rheumatism.

M. VAIL.

DELPHI, N. Y., Dec. 16, 1883.

ESTEEMED BROTHER FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE:—I think every time I write that it will be the last time that I will trouble you with my poor letters, for they are so much like the writer, poor, miserable affairs, not worth spending your time with; but for a few weeks past I have been thinking that I would answer your welcome letter. You expressed many of my feelings better than I could myself. How I would like wings to fly away from self and be at rest. I often feel like adopting the lines of the poet,

"O land of rest! for thee I sigh!

When will the moment come

When I shall lay my armor by,

And dwell with Christ at home?"

Yes, at home! What sweet words to the tempest-tossed and afflicted child. How sweet the message will be, Child, come home; thy Father calls thee. Elder Blakesly once told me that many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all; but the point with me is, Am I one of that number? If so, why do I go groping in darkness, without any light? Do you remember brother Keene's letter in the SIGNS not long since, how of one trouble and then another he speaks? One passes away, and then something else takes its place. So I find that I am not alone. The loss of my two dear children is something that will last as long as memory endures. Faith says, It is right; but the flesh cannot help mourning their absence. Yet I strive to think that the Lord is just. There are but few here who love the truth, and they are passing away, and soon, to all appearances, there will be none left, unless the Lord moves upon the waters. He will do all his pleasure, and his counsel shall stand.

I must say adieu, Love to all. Your unworthy sister,

C. A. STOWELL.

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, April 15th, 1888, **Mr. James Chadborn**, aged about seventy years.

He was a kind husband and father and a good neighbor. He kept around until a few days before he died, and then gave up that he must die. He felt to trust himself and all things in the hands of

God, for time and eternity. He has left his wife, who is a worthy member of the Old School Baptist Church of North Berwick, and who believes, as others do, that he was a child of God; for he believed that all the children of God are saved by grace. May God bless his wife and the two children that are left to mourn with strength equal to their day.

ALSO,

DIED—In Sanford, Maine, May 1st, 1888, Mrs. Mary Gowel, aged about seventy years.

She was a fine woman, and gave good evidence that she was a child of God, and was willing to die. She has left her husband and one child, with other relatives, to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—In Wells, Maine, May 9th, 1888, Mrs. Susanah Taylor, aged ninety-one years.

She told me years ago that she was a great sinner, but hoped in the mercy of God. She has left six children and other relatives to mourn.

ALSO,

DIED—In Shapleigh, Maine, June 16th, 1888, Mrs. Phebe Wentworth, aged seventy-five years and five months.

She experienced a hope in Christ years ago, and has ever been an Old School Baptist in belief, and has ever attended their meetings when she could. For years she had it on her mind to offer herself to the church, but her unworthiness kept her back. She was naturally one of the best of the race of Adam; but she has now gone the way that she never will return, and, we believe, to her eternal rest. She has left a kind husband, seven children, three sisters, with many other relatives, to mourn. A large number of people attended her funeral, and it was a solemn meeting.

ALSO,

DIED—In Haverhill, Mass., June 15th, 1888, Mrs. Lucy Ham, wife of brother Wm. Ham, aged thirty-seven years.

She died with the consumption. Her sufferings were great, but she was patient through all, and when the time came for her to die she was willing to go. She was naturally kind and pleasant to all, so that not one could say aught against her. It was evident that she loved the gospel of Christ, and died in the Lord. She has left her husband and many relatives and friends to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

My dear mother, Kezia Hutchinson, departed this life March 31st, 1888, after intense suffering of one week. She was taken suddenly and violently on Saturday morning, the 24th, with pneumonia. We had two most skillful physicians, who did all in their power; but the Lord's time had come. Their treatment could avail nothing, apart from relieving her pain. She grew worse till the next Saturday afternoon, when she received the summons, "Come up higher."

Mother was the youngest daughter of Harvey and Sinah Rice, and was born October 28th, 1828. She was married to Samuel Renner, May 10th, 1853, who departed this life January 11th, 1873, leaving her with two children, a son and a daughter. After ten long years of lonely widowhood, and many struggles with adversity, she was married to Thomas P. Hutchinson, January 1st, 1883, with whom she lived happily until called home. Twice has death entered his home and taken from him a loved companion; but he looks beyond this vale of tears to a blessed meeting in our Father's house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where there shall be no more tears.

Mother, at quite an early age, became a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at Fort Ancient, Warren, Co., Ohio, of which she remained a member

until her second marriage, when she removed her membership to the church at Lebanon, her husband's home. She was perfectly resigned and willing to go. Only a few days before she died she said, "O what a good thing it would be if the Lord would only take me home." I said, "No, ma, we cannot spare you yet." She did not speak on the subject again; but just before the spirit took its flight she called us all to her, but could not talk. From this we know she realized that the end had come. It seemed our hearts would break when we knew our dear mother must go. Language cannot express one-half the sadness of the parting. But amid all this we recognize God's love and mercy. We know that he doeth all things well, and that the hope of a glorious meeting will in time blot out to a great extent the bitterness of parting. I need your prayers, dear brother, and those of every child of grace, for I am spiritually very weak.

Your unworthy sister,

IDA McADAMS.

(See communication on page 162.)

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication the obituary notice of my dear brother, Peter M. Wright.

He died at his residence in Bedford Co., Va., April 16th, 1888, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. Had it been in the power of a loving, tender wife, fond children or anxious friends to stay the ruthless hand of disease, we would not be mourning his death; but God's ways are not our ways.

He was baptized in the fellowship of Lynville Church in the year 1857, by Elder Zachary Angel. In 1877 he was seriously exercised on the subject of preaching; and in 1878 he was ordained to the ministry. Though crippled by rheumatism, leaning upon his cane, he went forth far and near in answer to that call. He suffered much physical pain, but was willing in the day of God's power to labor, to cry aloud, and spare not, ever feeling that the gospel dispensation was laid upon him, and that woe was unto him if he preached not. In April, 1887, he preached his last sermon, after which he was not able to leave his home. He bore his sufferings patiently, constantly looking for the summons many weeks before it came. He talked of the goodness of the Savior, and was ever ready to give a reason of the hope that was within him. He spoke of his home beyond with so much assurance that he had been with Jesus. In him was the Scripture verified, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." He left a wife and eight children, two brothers and four sisters, with many other relatives and a host of friends, to grieve for him; but our faith tells us that to him it was Christ to live, and to die was gain. Let our thoughts then linger not about the grave, but seek him in the near presence of his Father and his God, in the home where every holy wish is met and every pure desire fulfilled, and where life clothes itself in eternal youth and unfading beauty. May God in his mercy fit and prepare each one of us who sorrows for him to meet him where parting will be known no more, where sickness and sorrow enter not; but there we will dwell in the presence of God and his holy angels, together with all those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, evermore to ascribe praise, honor and glory to his holy name.

MRS. N. A. McMANAWAY.

JUNE 26, 1888.

DIED—April 25th, 1888, sister Mary J. Goff, wife of brother E. F. Goff, of Montgomery County, Indiana, of measles and bronchitis.

Sister Goff was born August 29th, 1840, in this county, and was married to brother Edward F. Goff December 24th, 1863.

She was received and baptized at Indian Creek Church, in this county, nearly thirty years ago, by Elder Jonathan Vancleve, and continued her membership in that church until April, 1864, when she took a letter of dismission, and with her husband joined Bethel Church, at Waynetown, in this (Montgomery) county, Indiana, where her membership continued until her death. She was a sister very much beloved by all who knew her. She has left her husband and four children to mourn their loss, together with her dear brethren and sisters in the Sugar Creek Association and her correspondence; but we feel well assured that our loss is her infinite and eternal gain. She is greatly missed by her kind husband and loving children, two boys and two girls, as well as in and amongst all her friends and acquaintances. Her husband can say,

Farewell, farewell, my dearest wife;  
Life is sad without you here.  
O may we meet in heaven above,  
Where all is joy and peace and love.

Her funeral was preached at her late residence by Elders Jonathan Vancleve and Wm. H. Darnall, to a very large company of weeping friends and neighbors; after which she was taken to her last resting place in the Potts Cemetery, northeast of Waynetown.

WM. H. DARNALL.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I send you the obituary of brother Davidson Davis, who died May 22d, 1888.

Brother Davis had been blind twenty years. Elder R. T. Parsons appointed a meeting about a mile from brother Davis's. As he was on his way home a dead spruce pine broke, a limb brushing the side of his head, striking him on the shoulder, knocking him down on some rocks. He was taken up almost dead, and taken to his only child's, brother John A. Davis, where he was well cared for. Brother Davis was born in Scott County, Virginia, December 5th, 1821, being sixty-six years, five months and seventeen days old. Brother Davis was a firm believer in the doctrine of predestination and election, particular atonement, effectual calling, and salvation by grace. Our church (Concord) has lost a worthy member. His seat was never vacant on meeting day when he was able to get there. We say to his surviving companion, sister Davis, and to his only child, brother John A. Davis, Sorrow not as others who have no hope; for the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away: blessed be the name of the Lord. The unworthy writer tried to speak a few words of comfort to the large assemblage of friends and relatives, and the remains were interred in the Howerton grave-yard.

L. A. THORNBERRY.

SANDY HOOK, Ky.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the obituary of sister Luemina Adkins, who departed this life about August, 1887, leaving a husband and family to mourn their loss.

Sister Adkins was a member of the Old School Baptist Church, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of election and predestination. She was a member of the Union Church, and was always found faithful in her duty. The church deeply mourn their loss, and extend their sympathy to the bereaved family.

R. T. PARSONS.

SANDY HOOK, Ky., June 26, 1888.

RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

Eld. E. Rittenhouse 5, E. W. Thomas 6 50, Eld. A. V. Simmons 2, Thos. Jones 2.—Total \$15 50.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE Yearly Meeting at Bryn Zion is appointed the first Saturday and Sunday in August, and probably Monday also; Saturday at 2 p.m. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends from abroad; and whosoever will, turn in and abide with us, for we may be profitable to each other.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Lebanon Association of Regular Predestinarian or Primitive Baptists will, the Lord willing, convene with the Lebanon Church, Henry Co., Ind., on Friday before the third Saturday in August (17th), 1888, and continue three days, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m.

Those coming from the north, over the Ft. Wayne & Cincinnati Road, will stop at Springport, and those from the south at Mt. Summit, where they will be met. Those coming from the east and west will come over the O. I. & W. and the Pan Handle to New Castle, and inquire for Peter Coble. Come on all trains on Thursday and on the early trains Friday morning.

PETER COBLE, Clerk.

INFORMATION is hereby given to all who may wish to attend the Highland Association of the Regular Predestinarian Baptists, that by an arrangement, a change has been made in the place of holding the same. Therefore the said association will be held with the Salem Church, Mooney's School-House, four and one-half miles west of Sebree, Webster Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1888.

Those coming by railroad will be met on Thursday evening and Friday morning at Sebree with teams to convey them to the place of meeting. All Old School Baptists are cordially invited to attend.

T. H. BARKER.

THE forty-eighth annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, will convene with the Providence Church, Trimble Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888, and continuing three days.

Those coming east by rail will stop at Turner's Station, and those from the west at Campbellsburgh, on the Louisville & Cincinnati Short Line R. R., where they will be cared for, on Thursday and Friday. A cordial invitation is given to ministering brethren and all lovers of the truth.

E. F. RANSELL, Clerk.

THE Rock Spring Association of Regular Baptists is to be held with Mount Pleasant Church, in Carter Co., Ky., to commence on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888.

Said church is situated about three miles from Olive Hill. All Primitive Baptists are invited to attend who believe in the doctrine of predestination, election, particular atonement and salvation by grace; but we have no fellowship for those who hold the doctrine of general atonement and conditional salvation.

Brethren of the Primitive or Old School order attending our association will get off the train at Olive Hill, and inquire for brethren Adam Wallace or Henry Hicks, and they will be taken care of.

L. A. THORNBERRY, Clerk.

THE first session of the Roxbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Batavia Kill, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 5th and 6th, 1888, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m.

All lovers of truth are welcome to participate in the coming meeting, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

Those coming by public conveyance from Rondout or Kingston and way will stop at Roxbury, and from Hobart or Stamford at the same place, where the trains will be met from both ways, both morning and evening.

WM. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Mt. Gilead Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, con-

vene with the Mt. Gilead Church, two and one-half miles east of Hersman, Brown Co., Ill., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in August (8th), 1888, and continue in session three days.

Trains from the east will be met at the Wabash depot at Hersman, at 8:20 p. m., Tuesday, and 9:15 a. m., Wednesday; from the west, at 6:02 p. m., Tuesday, and 6:12 a. m., Wednesday. Those coming at other times will inquire for brethren D. W. Owens, Jas. Harper or John Jackson.

NATHAN PERRY.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet four miles north of Flannagan in Livingston Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by the Illinois Central R. R. will change cars at Kankakee Junction, and stop at Falannagan. Those coming by the Santa Fe R. R. will stop at Dana. Those coming from the west will have to change cars at Ancona, and stop at Dana. There will be means of conveyance to each place to take those attending to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is given to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Baptists will meet, the Lord permitting, with Plum Creek Church, six miles northwest of Winchester, Scott Co., Ill., at 10 o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1888. Brethren from a distance are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the east or west on the Wabash R. R., will be met with conveyances at Bluff City on Saturday morning, about 8 o'clock, trains arriving. Those from the north or south on the C. B. and Q. R. R., will be met at Winchester on Friday and Saturday at noon.

G. W. MURRAY, Mod.

GILES REEDER, Clerk.

### APPOINTMENTS.

EDITORS SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN:—If it is not asking too much, I would like the following appointments for Elder Caudell, of Kentucky, announced in the first of July number of the SIGNS.

In Ohio—Mill Creek Church, July 14th and 15th; Middle Creek, 17th; Clear Creek, 18th; Lebanon, 19th; Tapscot, 20th; Centerville, 21st and 22d; Reynoldsburgh, 24th; Walnut Creek, 25th; Pleasant Run, 26th; Union, 27th; Hebron, 28th and 29th; Gratiot, 30th; Bulah, 31st; Falls of Licking Shonon, August 1st; Pleasant Hill, 2d; St. Louisville, 3d; Wayne, 4th and 5th; North Fork, 6th; Mt. Pisgah, 7th; Ashley, 8th; Marlborough, 9th; Honey Creek, 11th and 12th; Vanburen, 14th; Albion, Indiana, 15th; Mt. Salem Association, 17th, 18th and 19th.

Brother Caudell's return will be through Indiana; the announcements will be made later.

With best regards, I remain, as ever, yours in hope,

ABRAM H. SMITH.

LIGONIER, Ind., May 21, 1888.

### RESURRECTION.

THE only book devoted to this crowning glory of man's salvation: 342 pages, plain print, well bound, 75 cents, post paid. All who read it will feel richly rewarded. Address

D. BARTLEY,

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SILAS H. DURAND.

Southampton, Bucks Co., Pa.

## Williamston Academy.

The Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888, and continues twenty weeks. The Academy is situated in a grove of large oaks, and has a well of excellent water. The location is about a mile from Roanoke River, and ninety feet above its level.

There were seventy pupils, thirty-two male and thirty-eight female, during the past scholastic year. Pupils are carefully prepared for business, or for any class in College. Monthly Examinations and Reports. Discipline mild, but firm.

The Principal has a large supply of useful Maps and Charts and Scientific Apparatus, and a valuable Library of Three Thousand Volumes, to which the pupils have access without extra charge. A Graduate, with the First Distinction, of the University of North Carolina, he has about Twenty-Five Years' Experience in teaching in Graded Schools, Normal Schools, and Private Institutions, both North and South, having from one to about three hundred pupils. He has the strongest testimonials, as to his scholarship and character, from the best and ablest men in North Carolina.

Thoroughly competent Assistants are employed.

### BOARDING DEPARTMENT.

The Principal has rented a large, pleasant, and commodious Building, convenient to the Academy, and is prepared to take both male and female boarding pupils as members of his own family; and, with his experience for fourteen years as Principal of the Wilson Collegiate Institute, Wilson, N. C., a large boarding school, he can assure his boarding students of fatherly care, kindness, and consideration.

### EXPENSES

#### PER SESSION OF TWENTY WEEKS.

Tuition in Primary Department	\$10 00
" " Preparatory Department	15 00
" " Academic Department	20 00
" " Commercial Department	20 00
" " Music	15 00
" " Drawing	10 00
" " Painting	15 00
Use of Piano or Organ	5 00
Academy Rent	1 00
Board with Principal, including Lights, Fuel and Washing	50 00

The Entire Average Expenses, including Books, are about Seventy Dollars per Session of Twenty Weeks. This amount should be paid half in advance, and half at the middle of the Session.

### CALENDAR.

Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888.

Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.

Spring Session begins Monday, January 21st, 1889.

Spring Session ends Friday, June 7th, 1889.

Vacation—One week at Christmas.

For further information address

SYLVESTER HASSELL, A. M.,  
Principal.

### A FIVE DAYS DEBATE

ON

### CHURCH IDENTITY,

In book form, from the stenographic report, between J. B. Hardy, of the Regular or Primitive Baptists, and Isham E. Wallace, of the Missionary Baptists. The book contains 360 pages, the same size as the "Editorials," together with the picture of each of the debaters, and will be mailed to any address, postage paid, on receipt of the following prices, viz:

Plain Cloth Binding	\$1 00
Genuine Turkey Morocco	3 00
Address	J. B. HARDY,
	Wellsford, Kiowa Co., Kan., or this office.

### LIFE'S JOURNEY AND LESSONS BY THE WAY.

This is a very interesting and comforting book to all Old School Baptists, written by sister Kate Swartout. It contains 304 pages, printed in large type. Price, single copy 75c; per dozen, by express, \$7.00. Send draft, money order, or registered letter, to Mrs. Andrew J. Swartout, Woodstock, Lenawee County, Michigan; but money orders must be made payable at Brooklyn, Michigan.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1888.

NO. 15

## POETRY.

### LORD, HOLD MY HAND!

Lord, hold my hand! The way is rough  
and wild.  
I stumble oft by self and sin beguiled.  
Pitfalls and snares lie thick on either  
hand;  
Unless thou dost uphold I cannot stand.  
I grope in darkness, vainly seeking light;  
Teach me to trust, and walk by faith, not  
sight.  
I cannot hold thy hand—do thou hold  
mine,  
And let thy love upon my pathway shine.  
Though all unheeded, through life's de-  
vious way  
Thine everlasting arms have been my  
stay;  
And when I shrank appalled from sor-  
row's cup,  
Thy hand unseen gave strength to drink  
it up.  
Be with me still—"I need thee every  
hour,"  
To shield and keep me from the tempter's  
power.  
In crooked by-paths oft I wander wide;  
If thou wilt lead no harm can me betide.  
Thou who hast said, "Ye needy, come to  
me,"  
Behold, I'm needy, therefore come to  
thee;  
And though a beggar vile, ask nothing  
less,  
The glorious robe of thine own righteous-  
ness.

ABBY G. CLARK.

SANFORD, Maine, July 17, 1888.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### EVIDENCES OF FAITH.

As indicated in the close of my first letter, the power of grace is wonderfully displayed in the call of all God's people, in every relationship to the body of Christ, either in common profession or in official callings. God's sovereignty and universal disposing have been indicated in every letter, and on every occasion, public or private, in which Christ and the apostles have left a record. So also, the faith of God's elect is here based upon the promise of that God that cannot lie (Titus i. 2), a brief reference to which may give us proper leading to the farther subject, and bears strong analogy to the promise given to Abraham, that in him and his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed.—Gen. xxii. 17, 18. This promise was made at the offering of Isaac, at Jehovah-jireh, but after he had already promised the land of Abram's pilgrimage to him, while he yet sojourned in the plain of Moreh, about one hundred and twenty-two years before.—Gen. xii. 7. And Paul mentions this promise to the Hebrew brethren (see Heb. vi. 16-18) with

great confidence, in comparing it to an oath; thus substantiating the evidence with all the authority that law could require. "For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

I am sometimes pained to see a spirit of apostacy from the strong language of the Scriptures, such as conveys the substance of every true heir of God's hope; for that hope cannot be based upon any other promise than that of God, cannot be cheered by any other counsel, cannot be sustained by any other destiny, cannot be assured by any other oath or promise: and each oath, each promise, must be expressed by words fit for the true meaning; and, indeed, I wonder how any child of God can object to the strongest terms possible, in their application to God's work, to God's evidence.

While upon this subject, I cannot forbear some feeble defense of the righteousness of all truth, and the appropriateness of any language that will convey that truth; for if any one can oppose the use of the word "absolute," merely because it is not to be found in the Bible, I fear it is not the word alone that they oppose, but its meaning; and if its meaning is unscriptural, let us see what its meaning is. The second definition can only be the objectionable one, as applied to predestination or the oath or the promise of God, and I therefore quote it alone from Webster: "Freed or loosed from any limitation or condition; unconditional; unconditional; as absolute authority and absolute monarchy, an absolute promise or command." Now I wonder if those who believe in God at all, believe that he is limited or conditioned, or that his authority, or promise, or command is not absolute or unconditioned; and if so, why oppose the use of this plain English word because it is not in the Scriptures? I have never met a man, either minister or otherwise, that used Scripture words only. May not the secret of their critical opposition have originated in their opposition to the truth it contained? God's oath, covenant

of grace, promise of life, purpose of reward and determination of punishment, were absolutely fixed in his own absolute sovereignty of will before the world began; and there were no contingent conditions possible to enter into that eternal life that then existed in the Godhead only, to give direction to contingent reasonings from cause to effect, since that absolute will was proportioned to absolute power, and gave absoluteness to every minutia in the absoluteness of every purpose.

Far saints, I cannot believe in any but an absolute God, Creator and Ruler over all. But while I use the word "absolute" freely, and rejoice in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made me free, I wish not to put a yoke of bondage upon any, to compel the use of any set of words; only let no brother make another an "offender for a word."

If the promise of God is an absolute promise, a certainty, an unconditional and an unconditioned expression of Jehovah's own will, this then perfectly corresponds with the whole testimony of Scripture, and the experience of every child of God. This is the hope, the personal hope, of eternal life, which "God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;" and I wish to trace some of the associated causes that this hope stands with; for I see this hope as a cause that follows its antecedent cause (the promise of God), and stands in relation to the saints as a motive power by which they are immediately led; for "we are saved by hope" (Rom. viii. 24); that is, made to experience the assurances of the promises of God; "for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us."—2 Cor. i. 20. There are no contingencies in them, but they are based upon his immutability, and follow as a consequence of his word.

"But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching."—Titus i. 2. How minute is every expression of the apostle in his writing. Reference is here had to one of the all things that work together for good to them who love God. They must not only hear preaching, but "in due times." They are wholly dependent upon God for his times; and his times are not set by men, but they all become due at his own times. The Lord hath a "set time to favor Zion."

"Which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Savior." Therefore the

apostle left Timothy in Crete, to see in order the things that were wanting. The apostolic observation of the needs of God's people was therefore a matter of God's appointment, and the apostle therefore unhesitatingly pursued the solemn work of his calling and office without personal ambition, and set forth the true index of character that stood as witnesses of God's work in preparing other ministers and witnesses of the cross, who should be accepted as ordained to the work of the various offices in the church. Titus was not only instructed to ordain Elders, but was told what particular marks were essential to that office. It was no an office set forth for the asking and, indeed, I have doubted the propriety of ordaining any man to that work who was forward and ambitious for it; for Paul wrote to Timothy also concerning the vast weight of responsibility resting upon the office of a bishop, which in all points is perfectly synonymous with Elder, in Titus i. Let it be noticed that, while Paul acknowledges "I a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work," yet he immediately, as if to check ambition and to cause heart-searching, break out with all the inspiration and authority of truth, and says, "A bishop then must be blameless. Who is to judge of this blamelessness? John says, "If we [and he was an Elder or bishop] say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Is this then the rule of judgment by which a bishop is to be judged? O is one who aspires to position of office truly blameless? I answer No. For no man should think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God has given to every man the measure of faith. And if man has faith in God, there is no cause for him to put himself forward for office, for that office will find him soon enough for his suffering. Further, it was this experience of suffering and responsibility that enable the apostle to speak in great solemnity of the office, for the true marks of the true servant of the church to be judged by. A bishop then must be blameless. It does not say, in his own esteem, but in the judgment of the presbytery; and this judgment must be unbiased; therefore the desire of a candidate is to be set aside, unless, at most, it be desire of resignation. I ask ever dear and aged Elder in the church to-day, Was there a real an

ingible desire paramount in your all to the ministry? If so, I confess how slow I have always been. Nay, the holy office appeared too sacred a place to be profaned by one so unfit as I.

"The husband of one wife." At least a limit is here expressed. Polygamy is fully forbidden. No divorce is allowed, since God ordained at first that no man should be put asunder that which God hath joined together; and no legalities of common law can justify a saint in any standing in breaking the sacred laws of God for the purpose of marrying another. A bishop must be blameless in this, as a suitable example to the flock.

"Having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly." While the Elder of a church or churches has all the responsibility of properly managing his own house while under his charge, it can only apply to those influences that he is known to exert while they are thus under his control.

"For a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God [faithful to every care in life]; not self-willed, nor unyielding to the proper desires of his brethren for selfish ends. But understand that an Elder should not be held more responsible for rashness of decision in matters of equity and righteousness than other brethren, since this would make him mere instrument of wrong at times, when evil passions ruled the brotherhood, and therefore deprive him of the real responsibility of his office.

"Not soon angry." This shows that in all matters of real worth his zeal should be engaged, but not to be in haste in denouncing or up-raiding, but faithful in exhorting, entreating, and sometimes reproving.

"Not given to wine." I wish to call particular attention to the especial care that the grace of God will give, teaching every saint, and Elders in particular, to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. And amongst the many vices of the day, tippling is one of the most common. No child of God can enjoy the practice, and I assert that no true servant of God desires or will defend the continual and repeated practice. If they feel the need of some stimulant, that need does not occur every time they may find it convenient to go to some place where intoxicating drinks are sold. Actual business may rarely call a brother there; but my humble experience is that no "pledge" is needful to make those visits short and rare. Such fruits cannot be congenial to christian character.

Here I couple two expressions that combine to enrich the church whose Elder is "not greedy of filthy lucre," but a lover of hospitality." I have a man in mind who, when asked to give some small assistance to an aged minister of Christ, could heartily remark, "He ought to have kept what he had then." What relief for the poor, and especially one

for whom he claimed a kindred relationship! The truly hospitable soul cannot but take pleasure in relieving actual need. It is enough to know that he sees his brother's need, that he should not shut up the bowels of his mercy.

"A lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate." These are the evidences of God's special temporal graces, and pledges of his mercy, so impressed upon the heart of one whom he has called to the care of the churches, that they abound to the sight of the brotherhood in general, and are witnesses of the Spirit. Such a man will shun all places of vanity, or, if entrapped, will seek an escape. A lover of good men may be compelled to chat awhile with the vile and the vain, but their company he cannot "keep," nor freely enter into the zest of their enjoyment, much less to deride or jest on matters of holy faith. While these, as we have seen, mark the course of life suitably bearing the marks of an Elder's call out from the world, and sometimes out from the general walk of the members of the church, these following marks bring them irresistibly forward before the brotherhood as reservoirs of the word of truth.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught." How essential that the office of bishop or Elder should only be recognized where these evidences exist, to show the candidate's stability in the most important matter that has ever called the attention of men or angels. It is not enough that a fine dissertation on abstruse theological terms and articles of faith be given, but that he show in his own especial gift, by the grace of God, and the unerring dictation of the Holy Spirit, that his doctrine is from God, and that the evidences of his ability to convince the gainsayers are visible in their effects. These, alas! however few there be who bear the marks, are the only true evidences essential to the call to the ministry of Jesus' word; and these embody all, all the excellencies of faith and order, an epitome of the whole volume of revealed truth. The apostle, however, enlarges on the multiplicity of words, to fill his part in the "times" that are evidently "due" before him, and to carry out that doctrine which he had received of God, and had defended from the first of his ministry, viz., the absolute predestination of all things; and I often wonder how a saint can read a single passage, verse or chapter without in some way associating it with the great whole economy of grace, one of the "all things" that "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

While some lately are especially opposed to God's predestination of all things, on the ground of making him responsible for sin, the apostle did not fear to advocate that same doctrine in his day; nor has God left

himself without witnesses in every age of the world; thus fulfilling all that the apostle refers to in the first chapter and third verse of Titus, as he asserts that God hath in due times manifested his word through preaching.

Now let us consider some of those "times" as a part of our subject. Witnesses are essential whenever called upon. If, therefore, God has never left himself without witnesses, he has continual use for them, and his set times are more authoritative than any courts of justice, for they are sure to stand in their lot and each to answer in his set time and place; and to this end all their times are set, as well as all the bounds of their habitation; and also of all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.—See Acts xvii. 26. Behold what wonderful display of wisdom in the arrangement of men to hear, the place to hear, the subject to hear, and the minister to speak: all arranged by God himself. I assert that the subject matter spoken was also determined of God; and this must minutely correspond in that destiny with the nature of the people spoken to or spoken of. But the times are unknown to the speakers till the times are "due" as thus set by the Sender. Hence the apostle refers to those times being indicated as then present when he was writing to Titus. "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision; whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." The real value of truth cannot be computed in dollars and cents. It is the spirit of truth, love and order only that should control in every decision in christian life, doctrine and order of church government.

For fear of unduly occupying space, I shall endeavor to close this correspondence in my next letter.

A. B. BREES.

JULY 11, 1888.

ELDER BENTON JENKINS—DEAR BROTHER:—I am told that you expressed a desire to publish in the SIGNS the inclosed letter from Elder Chick to myself. I am glad you wish it. It has been a comfort to several of the afflicted saints since I first received it, and has been appreciated by myself. I now send it to you, that it may go to the hearts of many who will rejoice to see it in print.

H.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Dec. 2, 1884.

MY DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST:—I have just been reading over again your good letter of November 6th. I have received a double enjoyment from it. I enjoyed what it says, and I enjoyed what it suggests. It is the same way when I listen to preaching. I enjoy a suggestive sermon fully as much as I do an exhaustive one. Of course a sermon must say something in order to suggest any

thing. Your letter was like a beautiful porch. In itself it was beautiful, and it opened the way into other beauties beyond.

One or two things I will speak of if I may. Your reference to the eagle and the dove reminded me that often the Bible makes use of the same thing to illustrate things opposite in nature. For instance, leaven sometimes represents wickedness, and sometimes the kingdom of heaven. The sun is a figure of joy, warmth, light, and again a figure of sorrow and tribulation; and so the eagle sometimes is used to represent fierceness, and sometimes care, power and love. I am glad to be reminded of this, because it suggests the thought that the very thing which at one time is a curse to one character, at another time is a blessing to another character. The same heat will harden clay and soften wax. There is no sort of difference in the heat, but in the nature of the objects subjected to its action. So in like manner sorrow or trial of any kind will harden the heart of one man, while it will melt and move another. There is no difference in the trial, but grace has made a difference in the subjects of it.

As you spoke of the silent flight of the eagle, it suggested to me the truth that all God's words and works are silent in their power and effects. Who ever heard the fall of a sun-beam? Who could hear the coming of heat? All nature is silent, from the growth of a leaf to the movement of the worlds. Elijah heard the speech of the Almighty, not in the fire or the tempest or the earthquake, but in the still, small voice. The kingdom of heaven is like leaven in the meal, like the mustard seed, and both are silent forces.

Your reference to the care of the eagle for her young, in this being akin to the gentleness of the dove, has suggested to me the comforting thought that God's strong, fierce things have love in them, as well as his gentle things. Any of us would be glad to woo the dove to our arms and hold it in our bosom, the soft and gentle and loving thing that it is; but who would welcome the eagle? And yet things that seem evil to us, and that we think will work us harm, after all have a service from God to render to us; and in them we are to see his loving care, as well as in his gentle, dove-like things. The eagle is his bird, and he has made it, as well as the dove; and it is his servant, and does his will. The eagles do not harm us, but remove the offensive things which would harm us. They have a fearful look, but let us see the arm that controls them, the power that sends them. There is love in them, but it is the love of God; and so the dove's gentleness is the gentleness of love. Then I remember that love itself can be fierce in the defense of its object. All this and more may we see in the eagle. I did not know that God said so much to us by the eagle until I read your letter.

The longer I live the more I am convinced that the things of this life, the things that we see, taste, handle, are not the real things. They are only the forms of things, the words of real ideas, behind them. The world and all in it is the word of God, as entirely as the Bible. O! if we could only read it! The Savior in his parables gave us some lessons in reading it. O that the Spirit would so clear away the dullness from our minds that we might learn faster what God has said in his book. Then we should never be alone, but should see and commune with God anywhere and everywhere. Then should we consider the lilies of the field to some profit, and the heavens would indeed declare the glory of God, and the firmament would show forth his handiwork, and all his works would praise him, while his saints would bless him. You ought to be glad that you wrote me, since it has suggested such delightful thoughts to me.

You speak about the contradictory character of Peter. It seems so to us, and yet everything said of him harmonizes with itself. It all harmonizes with the man. But aside from this there was in Peter, just as there is in every child of God, a warfare. There was flesh and Spirit in him. Self and God were there, as in us to-day. Jesus had just said that he was to be put to death. Peter loved his Lord in all sincerity, and he could not think that his friend should die, just as you and I could not bear that one whom we love should be put to death. But purely natural love spoke here when he said, "This shall not be unto thee." Natural love sets itself up against God as often as hatred does. It did so in this case; and it put Peter in opposition to the will of God, which was that Jesus should be crucified for our sins. In this he was an adversary to God (or Satan); for Satan means "an adversary." How often would our natural love keep back our friends, even our brethren, from some trial or sorrow that is good for them, and that God has appointed for them. In this we also are opposing God's will, and so the name "Satan" would belong to us as well.

On the other hand, we find Peter preaching the gospel boldly, and afterward dying a martyr's death. He showed wonderful sorrow for his faults, and wonderful zeal in the cause of God and truth. It was the same Peter in both cases. At one time led by one spirit, at another time led by another spirit. Were there any greater contradictions in Peter than you and I find in ourselves? For one I can answer no. I have all of Peter's bad qualities. I wish I had more of his good ones naturally; and I wish I had more of the grace that he had. I deny my Lord, like him; but I do not go out and weep as he did. Peter was a better man than I.

I would say further that I cannot divide the man so entirely from the

spirit, either of good or of evil, that dwells within him so entirely, as some do. Paul says, "I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." I, and yet not I, but grace. Not I, and yet I. Again, on the other hand, Paul said, "If I do that I allow not, it is no more I, but sin that dwelleth in me." Here again it is I, and yet not I, but sin. It is sin, and yet I. In Peter there were two laws, one of the members and one of the mind; or two principles, one of the flesh and one of the Spirit; or two men, the old man and the new man. But we must keep Peter himself in mind, as the man who was in possession of these two forces, called by these different names. It is to Peter and of Peter that Jesus speaks. This man Peter, when led by the old man, is called Satan (or adversary); but the same man Peter, when led by the new man, or law of his mind, would no longer be "adversary," and would not be called so. We are all servants to whom we obey. If we obey the flesh, we oppose God; if we obey God, we deny sin. Peter sometimes did one thing, and sometimes the other. The natural man only does one thing—serve sin. The child of God wants to serve God, and does serve him, but is hindered by the flesh from doing the good that he would. This is my experience.

My dear sister, I have thus written you a long, rambling letter. I hope I have rambled inside and not out of the garden of spices. I hope this letter will prove to you a fragrant bouquet of flowers from the Master's garden. May some of the natural fragrance of the flowers remain in this letter. May I hope to hear from you again?

As ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

CURFEW, Pa., July, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In my letter published in the SIGNS for May first, at the close I spoke of my first real attempt at prayer, and the importance I then attached to the effort, for it was an effort that I had heretofore successfully shunned; and not until I was completely prostrated by the power of God, and separated from human effort and trust, was I enabled by the spirit of prayer and supplication to break through the sense of flesh and natural feelings, and cry to God alone for strength in the hour of peril.

After the severe trial which I have spoken of against my sinful nature, and the breaking of my tacklings, I do not remember immediately of receiving such sweet assurances of my delivery from sin and of my acceptance with the Lord as some of the brethren speak of; but I seemed to be possessed with a certain unrest, a looking in another direction, a desire to inquire more for the way of salvation, and at the same time in such a quiet way that no person would know or surmise that I cared

anything about things of a religious order. I discovered that there was a desire with me at the time to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES more carefully than I ever did before; and there was some anxiety felt after reading one number to see the next, until I could almost claim an interest in the doctrine set forth in its columns, and among the poor, despised people who spoke to me through it. As the summer months of 1860 passed my health seemed to be uniform, that of a very low order, and earthly prospects of every sort were of the darkest kind; and as all earthly hopes seemed to be cut off, I not expecting to ever regain natural health and strength, I felt a great gloom gathering over me. If any ray of hope entered my dark soul it was because the Sun of righteousness had arisen there. The only avenue that led out of my fearful dilemma was the way that Jesus opened, and the highway in which he leads his people; for I felt at times, If God be for me, who can be against me? Also, that if a man believe in Jesus, though he were dead, yet he shall live; and if the body die, death cannot dissolve the tie of salvation that holds fast the chosen people of God, ready to be revealed at the last time. I well remember reading about this time many experiences of the little children of the kingdom of Jesus, which I thought did me a great deal of good, because my mind went out in love to them, for they always ascribed praise to God for the way of salvation, and for his teaching them it by revelation. Surely such simplicity is not found among those who ascribe praise, power and glory to man. Among these little children is the place of rest for the weary, the heavy laden, and the hungry and thirsty; and why? Because the Lord is there among them, as of old.

About the first of September there was to be an association of Old School Baptists called Little Flock, in Butler County, Ohio, about twenty miles from us, which I had a great desire to attend; but owing to my state of health, and the restricted diet that the physician had prescribed for me, I had faint hopes of having my desire realized. I had asked my father if I might accompany him there, but he was in doubt about the expediency of it until the time of starting, when my uncle, Elder J. C. Beeman, came along on his way to the association, who was pleased for me to go, saying that suitable arrangements could be made for me. I felt glad of it, and sorry too, for I was shy about speaking of these Old Baptist meetings; but I desired those precious crumbs, in my famished condition, that I realized fell from my Master's table. I think I did eat and drink after I got to the association. I think there was pure milk for me when the brethren met one another with hearty welcomes from different and distant places, showing in their manner (and I then

almost thought I could see in their faces) the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. I had not, up to this time, observed anything that had so impressed my mind with a sense of God's love as the meeting of the brethren on this occasion; and as I stood back, a stranger to most of them, I thought, O how lovely! and all doubts were removed as to their being the people of God. When the ministers arose to speak (among them were Elders D. S. Robinson, J. Robinson, J. H. Flint, Wm. Brooks, Lot Southard, J. C. Beeman, and perhaps others), it was like the certain sound to me, and peace that day was extended to me like a river, clear, pure, and flowing from the fountain of living waters. Since then I have had many doubts; but to-day, as I look back to that time, as I have often done, it does not occur to my mind that I had a single doubt as to who the people of God were. I felt fully satisfied of their genuine love for one another, and of their adherence to Bible truth. Just how I desired to be among them as a humble member I cannot express. Those who have had the same desire understand it better than I can speak of it. This was a time I shall long remember, for it was a feast to me. It was wine, and that well refined, and lasted a long time; and for months afterward I realized some of the sweets of the gospel seen and heard upon that occasion. I would like to ask the brethren that if after a good meeting, where the presence of the Lord was felt, when our minds are led back to that time, do we again enjoy that meeting to a certain extent? I think we do, and in proportion to our first enjoyment of the same; and these no doubt are some of the bright spots in our pilgrimage on earth. The meeting of loving, precious brethren, the proclamation of the gospel, are things relished and cherished by the disciples of Jesus, who are the little flock, and who have the promise of the kingdom.

A great many thoughts occupied my mind after returning home from the association mentioned above. Although my bodily ailments were the same, I partially lost sight of them; and I sometimes wondered if Paul, in speaking of being absent from the body and present with the Lord, had any reference to my state of mind. I thought I was foolish to harbor such lofty thoughts; but the great dread of death was removed from my mind, and resignation took its place, and why it was so I could not tell.

About the last of September my father and I were returning from a distant village, where we had been to see my doctor. We began to speak of my case, and both of us thought it hopeless, as the medicine that I had been taking did no good. I soon found that he had had a private interview with the doctor, and both were very doubtful. However, father and I soon began to speak of religion. I first asked some ques-

tions about the association, which seemed to give an opportunity for him to question me closely in regard to the state of my mind. He said he had a long time thought the Lord had something to do with my sickness, and if so, earthly medicine would not cure me. He told me his experience, his early life, how the Lord was gracious to him, and how he had preserved him. I was completely melted, and made a full confession to him of my troubles, and our conversation did not cease on this subject till we reached home. I told him everything now seemed to be praising God, the trees seemed to clap their hands, the clouds seemed to be praising God, the face of nature seemed to be changed, and I longed for the courts of the Lord. He said I ought to go before the church at the next meeting. I told him I would like to, but was not worthy; but he said they would receive me. On Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1860, I went seven miles to New Hope Church, Warren Co., Ohio. When the door was opened I arose, and in tears, and in a very broken way, related some things that I have written. I was received, and the next day was baptized by Elder J. C. Beeman.

Some things noticed in this and previous letters were written soon after I was baptized, and published in the SIGNS, I think, for June 15th, 1886. If it be the Lord's will, I may in the future speak about my wonderful recovery from sickness.

As ever, in fellowship,

J. BEEMAN.

St. JOSEPH, Mo.

DEAR BRETHREN:—It has been a long time since I could see how it was possible for any one, especially a christian, to read the Bible, as a revelation of the will and mind of God, and in the least limit his predestination. In fact, how a child of God dwelling in a realm of life and light, lifted up, wherein he is risen together with Christ to the high plane of thought and being where there are eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand, can set any bounds to the predeterminate counsels of the great I AM, is to me shrouded with mystery. Every man and woman with any degree of intellectual acumen (so as not to live wholly an aimless life), is a predestinarian in all the business avocations of this lower life. And the predestination he sets to future events is only circumscribed by the boundary lines of his sphere of operations, together with the wisdom he assumes as to the fitness of things pertaining to his domain. Take from man the right and power of predestination, and you bring on him a calamity that would paralyze every business interest of the world. No ships nor railroads would be made; there would be no traveling of any kind; no goods would be bought for future sale or for future use; no farmer would purchase a

plow to stir the soil; no seeds of any kind would ever be planted or sown. Suppose all the railroad arrangements to be as they are to-day, and allow no predestination on the part of the managers or employes, as to time of starting trains or the direction they should go, and in less than twenty-four hours a mass of wrecked ruin would be left between every two stations on earth. But men are not so foolish. And is it not one of the saddest comments on human depravity that man, assuming the necessary prerogative of predestination, will attempt to rob the Creator God of that immunity so essential to his infinite and changeless character? It would seem that any person, taking a dispassionate and unprejudiced view, would discover predestination in all the works of God, even if the Scriptures were as silent as the grave on the subject. As long as I ascribe infinity to the wisdom and power of Jehovah, it would be improbable or any logic, human or divine, to shake from my mind the conclusion that in creation itself is taught the absolute predestination of all things that come to pass in time, as a result of that creation. God could have made the world to be populated by holy beings, and made it impossible for sin to enter therein; and no other reason can be given why he did not do it but that he did not want to do it, but that he did want to make it just as it is. He willed, and it was done, and it was done as he wanted it, with all the results thereof; and we need go no farther to find the predestination of all things. But it is said that God did not make the world as it is, but he made Adam and Eve holy. I could well afford to challenge the Bible reader to find any such a sentiment anywhere in the revealed word of God. But they say, God pronounced him good. Good how, and what for? Was it moral goodness? Was he holy? Let us see. Turn to Genesis i. 31. "God saw everything he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Now mark, "Everything he had made"—snakes, wolves, lions, tigers, the fishes of the sea. Every living thing, the earth, inert matter, together with Adam, are placed in common under this one declaration, "it was good." Not holy, not morally good, but good for the purposes for which he made them. If good for these purposes, God making them in infinite wisdom and power, Adam with all else must fulfill his changeless will. And then it is claimed by the Arminian fraternity that Adam, as God created him, had the power either to refuse the forbidden fruit or to take it; that is, to have lived a holy or sinful life. Let the reader answer the question seriously, answer in view of the wisdom and power of Jehovah, Did Adam have the power to frustrate the purposes of the divine will? For my part I must answer, No. God says, "Remember the former

things of old [and that will include Adam]; for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me: declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." When Adam came from the hand of the divine Architect, he came a natural man; not only with the innate aptitude to sin, but with the seeds embodied in his nature, which did germinate into unholy activity. And his transgression was only the manifestation of the innate turpitude, principle or nature from which evil alone could emanate. Hear the testimony of the Son of God (Matthew vii. 17, 18), "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Now our beloved Lord made this declaration without any reservation whatever, and none will dare to deny but that it is applicable to all the created intelligence of God, whether in heaven or in earth, and as much to Adam as any other; and, applied to him, it declares that the fruit he brought forth came from a corrupt tree.

I hope the reader will remember that Adam was not deceived, but sinned with his eyes open; that his lust for that which was forbidden was so great that he was induced, right in the face of the terrible penalty, to transgress the law of his Creator. And still more than that, he seized the very first opportunity that was offered to commit an overt act of sin; for as soon as his companion had learned that it was desirable to make one wise, his carnal desire for an emolument not granted in the law was sufficiently strong to lead him, without any hesitancy whatever, to break over the boundary lines prescribed of God. I might add further, that facts are stubborn things; and there is one momentous fact we ought not to forget, and that is, Adam did sin, and in that sin he did obey Satan instead of God.

Now is it not obvious, from these and many other considerations that might be urged, that God did purpose in the creation of Adam (and hence in all his posterity) the exact results that followed? And that, however incomprehensible the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and his ways past finding out, nothing can possibly occur in all his mighty domain in the least inimical or adverse to the predeterminate counsel of him on whose firm decrees hang the destiny of all the vessels he, as the great potter, hath made, whether they be of mercy or of wrath, fitted to destruction.

I had intended to take at least a cursory view of the more direct testimony of God's word, and the illustrations of this soul-inspiring

truth our Father has given for the comfort and instruction of the people of his elective choice, such as the election and predestination of God's people to eternal life and holiness on the one hand, and Pharaoh, Jacob and Esau, Judas, the wicked hands that crucified Christ, the selling of Joseph, the potter and the clay, and many more on the other hand. And I desired to speak of the embryo of that precious truth embodied in the spiritual life of the believer, and taught in the invincible work of grace in the heart. My poor article is already much too long, yet I cannot forbear to point to that which has ever been the great joy of the suffering church of Christ, all the way down through the fires of martyrdoms, scoffs and sneers of the almost nineteen centuries of the past. You will find it in Colossians i. 16. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible: whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." Now remember, "all things." All that we can see; all that we cannot see; all dominions; the dominion of Satan; all principalities; all powers; powers of men and devils; power to commit the wretched sin of delivering Christ into the hands of the wicked mob, was given Pilate from above.—John xii. 11. And then all the powers of his own glorious kingdom of grace. "By him," and "for him," for his use, to carry out his purpose. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And now, dear saints, I will close by saying that it is the joy of my poor, sin-crushed heart that my God and your God does not have to cower to the exigencies of time, watching events that transpire under the power of earth or hell, that he may overturn them; but that "His arm shall rule for him."—Isa. xl. 10. And he "Worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." I would not seek for reasons anywhere, only as given by our beloved Lord, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

H. S. CLOUD.

SCALESVILLE, Ind., March 17, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS, AND ALL THE READERS OF THE SIGNS—DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—How often I have been made to wonder why it is that there appears to be so many of God's dear children led off and captivated by the bewitching snares of the enemy, and how it is possible for one that has been born again, born of incorruptible seed, to feed upon and seem to relish "husks," the doctrines of men. O how often I try to pray to the Lord that he would convince them of their errors, if it is his holy will, and show them the true church. And at other times I think that they have the same Bible to read that I have, and why is it that I differ from them? Then I am

made to stop and reflect, and ask, "Who maketh thee to differ?" O Lord, can it be thy grace? Can it be that the blessed Savior died that I, a poor, guilty sinner, a hell-deserving sinner, one that felt justly condemned, and merited nothing but eternal banishment from God and the holy angels, might live? O my soul, can it be possible that poor, unworthy me should be so highly favored? Yes, dear little lambs of Jesus, I can at times say, I have a hope that he died that I might live, and it has been made manifest to me by his speaking peace to my troubled breast, when I was in deep distress and almost ready to give up all for lost. Last summer I went to hear a man preach. He took for his text the commission the Savior gave to his disciples, and read it in Matthew, Mark and Luke, but confined himself mostly to Matthew xxviii. 19, 20, which reads, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." This preacher said that the "all nations" here spoken of meant all of Adam's race, and that every man, woman and child that had come to the years of accountability were capacitated to receive the teachings of the gospel and come to Christ; that God required of them to repent and believe it, and that their eternal salvation or damnation turned on their choosing or refusing. My Bible reads, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."—John vi. 44, 45. Now we understand Jesus to mean by this language that the Father draws them, his children, his elect family, the bride, the Lamb's wife. He does not say that the Father draws at them, or toward them, and they must meet him on half-way ground, &c. The forty-seventh verse of the same chapter reads, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." What is everlasting life? It is without beginning, neither hath it any end. Where did it come from. Did man get it by his good works? Nay, verily. It came down from heaven in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. John i. 10-13: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This ought to settle the whole

matter as to who has a right to the tree of life. The boasting Pharisee, claiming to have Abraham for his father, is excluded on the ground that his being of the seed of Abraham does not give him any more right or claim than being of the seed of the Gentile nations. His blood is not consulted, nor the will of his flesh, nor the will of man, but the will of God must be done. Ye must be born again, or ye cannot see the kingdom of God. Therefore "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that showeth mercy." "Baptizing them in the name of the Father," &c. Who are to be baptized? Are the "all nations" indiscriminately to be baptized, or is there a distinction? We think there is. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." It is the heaven-born soul that feels that it is a duty he owes to God, and to his brethren, and feels that he is dead to sin, and cannot live any longer therein. He has been made alive to the love of holiness. Old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new to him. He desires now to walk in the footsteps of his Master, and take his yoke upon him, and learn of him. This preacher asked, "Which is the right mode? There are three ways in which men claim to baptize—sprinkling, pouring and immersing." He said, "Any way to satisfy the candidate." But he admitted that the Savior, and all that John baptized, and the eunuch which Philip baptized, were immersed. But he imagined that the jailor and all his household were sprinkled, for he thought they never went out of the jail or prison. Read it again, friend. "But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them," &c.—Acts xvi. 28-34. We fail to see anything in this to justify sprinkling or pouring for baptism; for he had them out of the prison, and washed their stripes, and was baptized by them while out; and the jailor afterwards brought them into his house. The word baptize means to immerse, to dip, to plunge, to cover up, &c. Therefore there is no proof of sprinkling at all in this case. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Now are we to teach anything outside of what he has commanded? No; then it is not

right to teach sprinkling for baptism, for we cannot find it commanded in the Bible, nor even a hint of it. Nor are we to teach them that Sunday Schools, or tract societies, or even the much recommended mourner's bench, have anything to do in it, nor that there is any virtue in them to bring God under obligation to save sinners. If all these boasted good works, the so-called prayers, groans, tears, protracted meetings, and the balance of the inventions that men have gotten up to save, or help the Lord to save sinners, were brought to bear upon one poor sinner, it would amount to nothing, and less than nothing, yea, vanity. O poor, fallen and depraved man, how vain it is for you to think that you, poor, little, insignificant worm of the dust, can change the mind of God. "I am God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "I am God, and besides me there is no Savior." "Teaching them [God's chosen people in all nations] to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Teach them to take up the cross and follow him through evil as well as good report; to go home to their friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, and has compassion on them. O, dear child, go tell your brethren how the Lord found you in a waste howling wilderness, and led about and instructed you, and kept you as the apple of his eye; tell how you tried your prayers, your tears and your groans, and how they all seemed to do you no good at all; but when you had almost given up in despair, and could see no way of escape, and felt that your condemnation was just, and could say with the poet,  
 "If my soul were sent to hell,  
 Thy righteous law approves it well."  
 Jesus of Nazareth came that way, and spake peace to you, which calmed your troubled soul, and caused you to rejoice in God as your Savior, and you were made to love the brethren. John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." O, dear child of God, if you have experienced these things, do not cast your lot among these work-mongers, for they only excite the flesh and feed the animal passions. And if they have caught you in their net, come out from among them; because you are in the wrong place as sure as you are alive. The heaven-born soul cannot feed on those "husks." You can find a people that worship God in the Spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh; and these are your people, and their God is your God.  
 My mind keeps running on, but time and space forbid that I should write any more. Your brother in hope,  
 C. C. HEATH.

GLENWOOD, Tex., June 27, 1888.  
 G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith inclose you the experience of our highly esteemed sister, Mary A. Woodall. While it is not so full as I desired, having heard her tell many things in connection that she has not written in this, yet I think it calculated to comfort those who have obtained like precious faith, and so I desire to see it in the SIGNS. However, it is submitted to your better judgment, as she requests. As ever, yours to serve,  
 H. B. JONES.

HARRISON COUNTY, Tex., June, 1888.  
 DEAR KINDRED:—As I have been requested to write some of the Lord's dealings with me, by the help of God I will try to pen a few thoughts; but I can say and realize that it is a great undertaking, for I feel my unworthiness and inability to write anything comforting to the household of faith. I often wish that I could write as others do who write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I sometimes feel to hope that I have a love for God's dear people, a love which the world can neither give nor take away.

When I was about fifteen years old, my parents, W. and S. Dollahite, lived in Lafayette County, Miss., and I went with them, as I often did, to meeting at Antioch Church. Their pastor, brother E. A. Meadows, had taken this text, "Salvation is of the Lord." I remember while he was preaching that I wished so much that I could be a christian. About the close of his sermon he began to exhort the brethren, extending to them his hand. I then for the first time saw myself a poor, lost sinner. I then set out to try to do better. O how often would I promise myself to do better, and as often failed. I would try to pray, but that seemed to be adding sin to sin. I would sometimes go with gay company to get relief, and would often do and say things that I felt to be wrong, to hide my feelings from others, for I did not want any one to know how bad I felt; but when alone I would think that in the place of doing better I was getting worse and worse. I went on in this way for four years. I began to think that there was no mercy for such as I, for I felt that surely I was the worst sinner then living. One evening I started out to a lonely place to pray, perhaps for the last time, as I thought. While meditating, I thought if I only could have faith to touch but the hem of Jesus' garment, or could say, nothing doubting, God, be merciful to me, a poor sinner, that the good Lord would bless me. But I felt too unworthy to even fall down and take his holy name on my sinful lips. Just then these words came to me, as if spoken, "Come hither, soul, I am the way." I then said, Now I know that I am wrong. I then tried to pray that God would

teach me the right way. I had lost all confidence in self. I had done all that I could do. I thought that unless Jesus interceded for me I was lost, world without end. About this time I went to a Missionary Baptist protracted meeting. I felt like I had rather be alone, but thought I would go with the family. I was so burdened that I could scarcely eat or sleep. On Monday, the fifth day of August, 1845, I felt that surely that was the last day that the good Lord would let me live; but I felt if I was lost, God was just; if saved, it was all the goodness and mercy of God that saved me. I had went with others to be prayed for; but feeling too unworthy to sit on the seat with them, I got down on the floor. I do not know how long I sat there, but there was a calmness came over me. My father came to lift me up, saying, "My daughter, put your trust in the Lord." I looked up, and his countenance looked so bright I thought that he was the sweetest looking person I had ever seen. I was amazed, and thought, What is the matter? My burden was gone. O, I thought, I would not be deceived for this world. I began to cry, O Lord, if I am deceived, do thou undeceive me. I was then made to claim Christ as my Savior, and was inexpressibly happy, full of joy and peace. Everything seemed to be praising God. I was then made to see how God could remain just and the justifier of such a sinner as I was.

It has been nearly forty-three years since I have ventured to hope that I, a poor, unworthy, sinful mortal, received a revelation from God that my sins, though many, were borne by the blessed Son of God in his own body; and within that time I have passed many more seasons of darkness than of light, but am still hobbling along through this vale of sin and sorrow. Thanks be unto my blessed Savior. I sometimes feel to say, I know that my Redeemer lives.

I was with the Missionary Baptists when I obtained a hope. I felt like I wanted to be baptized. I was young, and had never read the Bible much. I believed them to be a good people, and I loved them dearly. On the eighth day of August, 1845, I was baptized by Elder Samuel Halliburton. I was very well satisfied for several years. As I became better acquainted with the reading of the Scriptures, I became more and more dissatisfied with their mission system. But the doctrine of election and the predestination of all things troubled me no little. In 1852 I went to the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder M. Jeter. But I wanted to carry the doctrine of predestination as far as it relates to the spiritual family, and that God would permit certain wicked things to take place. I became so troubled that it was on my mind day and night. I concluded to read the New Testament. I read it

through, but still did not understand. I thought I would read again, more carefully. When I came to the eighth and ninth chapters of Romans, I could then see that it was all according to the will of God. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate," &c. The more I would read and ponder over the matter, the greater the impression became fixed in my mind that it was all according to the wisdom and fixed purpose of God. I love the doctrine more and more, for there is my hope for salvation. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," &c.

MARY A. WOODALL.

RUSHMORE, Ohio, April 6, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I herewith send you a letter from sister Franks, which I would like to see published in the SIGNS, if you think it worthy a place in our family paper.

Yours with the best of wishes for the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

J. G. FORD.

STANLEY, Ind., Jan. 28, 1888.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I cannot tell why it is that my mind is so impressed to write to you, but it seems that I must tell you how I love to hear the gospel truth, unworthy as I feel myself to be. It strengthens my hope and sends my mind back to the day my hope was fixed in him who suffered on the cross for the sins of all his dear people, and I feel like telling the reason of my hope. I cannot tell the beginning. The first I noticed, my worldly pleasure was killed, and then came a desire to read the Bible. I cannot say I would read very long at a time, for I would feel condemned, and close the Bible, and go on my way mourning on account of my sins. Sometimes I would try to get rid of my trouble, and try and enjoy myself. I might for a season, only to return again, showing me I was a sinner, and no good dwelling in me. I went on in that way quite awhile, when one night I went to bed thinking I would throw off my troubles and cares and sleep peacefully. Then my sins arose before me like mountains. I rolled and tossed about, wondering what I could do to have rest. I felt too unworthy to pray for myself. I finally thought of my mother, and I verily believed that she was a good woman, and thought I would ask her to pray for me. She was sitting up yet, and I started to go to her. As I went, I saw all hope cut off there, and a still, small voice said, "Look to Jesus." I had not the eyes of

faith to look, and so I went and sat down in the room where mother was, and groaned aloud in my agony. She asked me what was the matter. I said, "I am lost." I felt as though I was on the brink of a precipice, ready to be cast into endless woe. I suppose you will wonder if I felt justly condemned. I did feel,

"Though he sends my soul to hell,  
His righteous law approves it well."

My mother called me to her and gave me a hymn to read. I had thought there had never been a case like mine. I read,

"How lost was my condition  
Till Jesus made me whole."

I had found in the perusal of that hymn that there had been one brought as low as I, and had found pardon. It gave me some comfort, and I retired for the night. The next morning I arose with the family, and thought I would try and help with the work as usual; but I found that would be impossible. I was sin-sick. I wandered away from all of them. I felt if I could hide myself from the presence of the Lord I would gladly do so. I was trying to be reconciled to my doom. I saw I could do nothing. It was useless to appeal to my earthly friends, for they had no power to help me, and without the Savior I was lost. But in a moment I least expected, these words came rolling through my mind, "You hath he quickened and made alive, who was dead in trespasses and in sins." They went down deep into my heart. In a moment I was changed from darkness and despair, into God's glorious and marvelous light. It seemed when I looked around me the whole world was illuminated with his light and love and joy unspeakable, and full of glory. I felt then I loved the Lord, and with tender emotion I loved his dear people too. I saw then my mother was one of them, and I had to go to her and tell what great things the Lord had done for me. Then I could sing,

"Salvation! O the joyful sound!  
'Tis pleasure to our ears;  
A sovereign balm for every wound,  
A cordial for our fears."

Then it was impressed upon me to be baptized. I felt it my solemn duty to try and follow my Savior's footsteps in all the commandments that he had laid down for his people. I went to what was called the Old School Baptist Church, to offer myself for baptism. I thought as I went that I would try and tell what great things the Lord had done for me. When I arrived there, not one word could I say. I had talked some with Elder Thomas previous to that time, and he expressed his willingness to receive me, and I felt very thankful then, for it seemed if I went home without baptism I would go into despair. I went down in the water with fear and trembling, and came out telling the people that Jesus had been merciful to me, a

poor and helpless sinner. It seems I was made to tell what a precious Savior I had found. I went in that frame of mind for several days. It seemed, though I lived in the smallest tent, and nothing but my raiment upon my body, I were rich, while I could feel his dear and loving presence with me. But alas! that was not to last always. When I saw the clouds arising that shut out my light, and darkened my pathway, then I began to mourn; and I think I have went in darkness the greater part of my time since. I have taken more comfort in penning what I trust have been the Lord's dealings with me, than anything I have done in a long time. I believe that all the trials and afflictions that we are called upon to pass through while we are here in the flesh are for our good. These four lines I feel are in accordance with my mind,

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,  
Ever gracious, ever wise;  
All my times are in thy hand,  
All events at thy command."

I was about to say that I believe everything that has happened to me was in the arrangement of God, and I desire to be reconciled to all things. In your last sermon on Sunday, how beautifully you illustrated God's mighty power, and cut off all works of man. It seemed to me afterward that I ought to have gone and told you that your talk had stirred up my pure mind, and sent me back to the day that I felt that peace was spoken to my troubled soul. I only wish we could hear such able sermons oftener. And Elder Trumbo, how I love to hear him preach. This much I must say, the Old Predestinarian Baptists are the people I love to hear talk, and they are the only people I could live with and call my home. I fear I have wearied you. Please excuse my poor, blundering letter, and accept my best regards for yourself and wife, and Elder Trumbo, wife and family.

ELIZA J. FRANKS.

MARLBOROUGH, N. C., June 28, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Some of the brethren and friends with whom I met at the Baltimore, Delaware and Delaware River Associations requested me to write to them through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, after my return home. I feel a willingness to comply, but I do not wish to occupy any space in your excellent paper, to the exclusion of more important matter.

I left home on Saturday morning, April 28th, and spent two weeks in visiting some of the churches in the bounds of the Kehukee Association, in North Carolina. I found them all in peace, so far as I could judge, except one, and that one appeared to be laboring for the restoration of peace. May the good Lord direct and bless their labors.

I reached Baltimore on Tuesday morning, May 15th, and was kindly received and cared for by the brethren.

ren; and indeed throughout my entire trip I was received and treated as a child and servant of God. I found the Baptists north to be the same in faith and doctrine that they are south. Truly the Lord's people are our people. I heard ministers from eleven different states preach the same glad tidings of gracious deliverance from sin, through the efficacious atonement made on Calvary by our great and adorable High Priest, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. And he is thus the end of the law for righteousness for all them that believe; who are called according to his purpose. Unless those ministers had been led by the same Spirit of truth they could not have so minutely and harmoniously testified, under such different circumstances and varied prejudices and trainings, to the great and glorious teachings of God's holy Spirit in our hearts, bringing us to know ourselves as sinners and rebels against the holy law, revealing Jesus as the great antidote of sin, leading us to realize the holiness of God in his direction of all things after the counsel of his own will, and causing us to appreciate that it is he who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. The salvation of those chosen in Christ, or the giving of eternal life to those that were given to him, seems to me to be the purpose in view in all the works of providence and grace. And for this purpose, power over all flesh was given to Jesus, the son and servant; and he came not to do his own will, but the will of the Father, the infinite Deity, that sent him. And it is in this way and for this purpose that the natural as well as the spiritual blessings are bestowed on poor, fallen man. And though all men are partakers of the natural blessings through him, yet none receive the blessing of eternal life but those that were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, for they only are represented in the mediatorial work of redemption, and receive the witness of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. These are the only ones drawn to Jesus by the Father, and none others can come; and every one given him of the Father comes to him, and he casts out none that come. This is a complete and safe plan of salvation, all of perfect joint work throughout, and is revealed to babes, while the rich, mighty and noble are sent empty away.

I was blessed to reach home on Tuesday, June 12th. I was absent forty-six days, and tried in my blundering way to preach thirty-one times. I found my family all up

and enjoying tolerably fair health, though my wife and some of my children had been somewhat sick a few days before. The many acts of christian forbearance, kindness and fellowship extended to me by the many dear brethren and sisters with whom I met will be dear to me while memory lasts. Very affectionately,

D. A. MEWBORN.

WESTCLIFFE, Col., March 4, 1888.

MUCH ESTEEMED BRETHREN BEEBE:—During the past three years I have gathered up quite a large private correspondence with brethren and sisters, extending from Mississippi to Oregon. A number of them continue to express a desire that I write oftener to our family paper, the SIGNS. Often do I feel if my brethren could get but a glimpse of this poor, sinful, deceitful heart of mine, they would blush to call me brother, much more to have fellowship for me. To some I have written when very much cast down, groping my way through thick darkness, when it seemed to me there was not even a ray of light from the Sun of righteousness that reached to my poor, benighted soul. These letters were full of the most bitter accusations against self; and after written and mailed I would reflect over the contents, and I would regret sorely that I had written and sent them, for I could not see how any one could draw any comfort from them. But when the replies came they were full of joy and rejoicing, each telling me how they had been edified, built up and spiritually strengthened. Herein, brethren, I think when we can see our own imperfections and feel our own weakness, then it is we are enabled to comfort and edify our brethren; and can say as the apostle, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

Some of my correspondents ask me to reply to their letters through the SIGNS; but, brethren, I do not desire to do this for various reasons, but particularly if this course was adopted by the editors it would, in my opinion, lead to much contention. I have no desire to see my imperfect letters published in our family paper, to the exclusion of better and more profitable writers. Since January first I have written and mailed fifty-seven letters, some of which contained many pages, and I must say that I feel that I am much benefited by this correspondence; and I do feel thankful to our heavenly Father in that he put it into the hearts of so many of the dear saints to write me such comforting and soul-cheering letters as I have received since I have been cast in this lonely spot of earth. With some I have had considerable controversy. Although we widely differ upon some points, yet my love and fellowship for them as the dear children of God has not in the least been marred. Knowing full well that we are at best nothing but poor,

erring creatures, let us heed the admonition of the apostle, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." It is impossible for us to see alike in all things, hence we cannot or do not understand all things alike. Here we only can see in part and know in part. The apostle says, "If any man think he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." But when that which is in part shall be done away, then shall we know even as we are known. Sometimes I am enabled through the Spirit to mount up as it were on eagles' wings, and losing sight of all earth and earthly things, I reach forward and try to get a glimpse of that glorious scene, when all the dear children of God are gathered home to glory, and enter into the full possession of that glorious, eternal inheritance, prepared for them ere time began. But O, my dear brethren, how far short do I come of realizing even in the minutest sense what a glorious scene that will be. We may through the Spirit, as through a glass darkly, get a foretaste of it; but never will we be able to comprehend that "glory which shall be revealed in us," until Jesus hath subdued all things, and he become subject unto the Father, that "God may be all in all." Then we shall know as we are known, and shall see our blessed Savior as he is, for we shall be made like him. O what a glorious hope this is! Could we desire more? O no; but like David, we can say, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Then we shall no more endure pain, sickness, sorrow and death, for all these shall flee away. There all we shall enjoy will be perfect peace, and all we shall experience shall be perfect bliss; and through grace divine we shall join that heavenly throng in singing songs of everlasting praise unto his holy name, world without end. Amen.

I am yours in hope of life eternal,

J. H. YEOMAN.

MARCH 4, 1888.

GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS:—I have often thought I would like to write you a long letter, and tell you of my travels, and of a time when I was made to feel that the dear Lord had pardoned my sins; but I feel so poor, weak and unworthy that I dare not attempt it. I will say, however, that although I am not a member of your church, I do love to read the SIGNS, and find some encouragement in reading of so many others who have been led along just as I have been, which often makes me think that surely we have all been taught of the same Spirit. And if I know anything about salvation, it is in the way those people tell it and preach it. Long years I wandered in darkness, sometimes begging and praying for mercy; at other times I would be more at ease in mind, and would join in the pleasures of this world, and forget

for a season. But my trouble would return again with more power, and I would again pray; but O it seemed a mockery, and my petitions seemed to go no higher than my head. Then I would think it was a sin for one so vile as I to try to pray, and would find myself asking God to forgive me for trying to pray. So I went on from bad to worse, until there came a time that my very breath was prayer; when I was afraid to go to sleep at night, lest I should awake no more in this world. I surely thought I would awake in endless punishment. At last, when I could do no more, and had given up all for lost, at a time when least expected, it pleased the blessed Master to remove my trouble, and to pour out his mercy with such a fullness of his grace that I, who but a moment before had been the most abject beggar, was suddenly made rich in the blood of the Lamb, and was made to shout and sing his praises for his mercy to me, a poor, lost, ruined and undone sinner. And for a time no mortal was more happy than I. I felt his loving arms beneath me, and that sweet peace of mind the world knows nothing of, that passeth all understanding. But alas! for poor me. After awhile came doubts and fears, and I found I had the old Adam to contend with. And when I would do good, evil was present with me. I found a continual warfare of sin, temptation and strife. I found myself so carnally minded, so easily beset, and until I was made to cry out, Who will deliver me from the body of this death?

I did not intend to write as I have, and I beg your pardon for so doing; but I am in such trouble that it relieves me to write to you. Although a stranger in the flesh, I do feel sometimes as if we were heirs of the same inheritance. Like one alone I seem to be. Surely there is none like me. I would be glad if I could see you and talk to you. I am in deep trouble, and can see no way out. At some time I may write you and tell you all about the matter, and ask your advice. Would you give it? I feel that you would when you have heard my story. Farewell. May you be blessed with a larger circulation this year than ever before, and when it goes well with you pray for me, a poor, weak, faltering one, who has been tossed about until she is wrecked on a lone, barren shore, and finds herself cold and hungry, and a long way from home. Again begging pardon for the length of this letter, I bid you good-by, hoping to find comfort in reading your paper. I am very truly your friend,

J. J. F.

OREGO, N. Y., May 6, 1888.

DEAR EDITORS:—With your permission I send this precious letter to you for the SIGNS. The rich expressions which it contains will, I know, give it a place. The heavenly

manna is given alone to the Israel of our God in these days, the same as it was with ancient Israel. None but they gathered then, neither do any others now. It is well to speak often one to another, and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. There are so many good things in the SIGNS. I would like to speak of many, if I could write my thoughts. The last editorial is full of truth. It is continually with me. It was set forth so clearly, and it seems to settle my mind that the serpent is working fast at this time to break, if it were possible, the bond of union. He is truly licking up the dust. O, my dear kindred, let us all beware how we walk, talk, write and act; for it looks as if a fire was being kindled outside of the walls of the royal city. May the Lord will in his dear people, for his name's sake.

CHRISTIANA L. FRENCH.

LA CYGNE, Kansas, April 10, 1888.

DEAR SISTER FRENCH:—Having read your letter in March 15th SIGNS, which gave me much pleasure and enjoyment, I thought that I would try to write you a few lines; not that I can write anything that will interest any of God's dear children, but I dearly love to correspond with those of like precious faith. It seems sometimes that if I could write as good letters as those that I receive of like precious faith, or as those that write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it would be a pleasure for me to write. But why should such a one as I attempt to write to one of God's dear children? They all speak the language of Canaan, are all taught by the same Teacher, and all testify to the same fact, that salvation is of the Lord. If there is one theme that I do love, it is surely that of salvation by grace alone. God's grace is sufficient for all of his children. I rejoice that salvation is of the Lord. I went to one of our meetings last July, and told the church what I had to tell them. They received me, and I was baptized the next day. I do not get to our meeting very often. It is about forty miles from here. I would like to see you and hear you talk; and although an entire stranger in the flesh, I trust we are not so in the Spirit. I trust that the Lord has taught me that it is through what he has done for me that I am saved, if really I am. My only hope is in what he has done for me, and not what I have done or can do. I can do nothing without him. How comforting are the words of Jesus, that he will not leave nor forsake any of his children, and that of all that his Father hath given him he should lose nothing, but will raise it up again at the last day.

Well, I will close this letter before I make it too lengthy, if I have not already done so, hoping to hear from you soon. May God be with all his believing children wherever they are. Your sister in hope,

ALICE DODD.

WILSON, N. C., July 7, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Last May a strong impression to visit the associations north of our state prevailed, and I at once set out, not knowing whither I went. Arriving at Baltimore, I found Elder Lester and others, with whom I was not personally acquainted. They were on their way to the Delaware Association, and in their company I went to Newark, Delaware, where the first association was to be held. Here I also met Elders Hardy and Mewborn from this state. We were conveyed to the residence of brother Campbell, where we were made comfortable. Elder Hubbell and myself stopped here. I felt rather cast down in my spirit, and I cannot think but what I must have been but a sorry companion with such loving people as they proved to be to me. At the association I was introduced by Elders Beebe, Durand, Lester, &c., and soon the entire assembly acted as old acquaintances. The meeting was a season of refreshing to be remembered by God's dear people evermore.

At the Delaware River Association the Elders one and all proved that they had the cause of God's truth at heart; and when Elder Eubanks closed the meeting with, "He hath done all things well," a few of us little fellows were called upon to address the meeting with a few remarks, not exceeding ten minutes. At Hopewell, New Jersey, I found a hearty welcome at the home of our highly esteemed brother, Elder Wm. J. Purington. The worthy pastor of the Hopewell Church of Christ received me in his loving way, and his dear family endeared themselves to my heart exceedingly. On Sunday morning I went to meeting at Hopewell, and never have I witnessed such a sight as met my eye there. The meeting-house, a fine and large structure, was surrounded almost entirely with equipages of all kinds. The people seemed a multitude to me, as may be seen at large associations only. I addressed the congregation at the request of the pastor. I could but worship God in his holy temple. In the afternoon Elder P. took me to another of his charges, and here too I met with several, as I believe, that feared God and loved his most holy name. O how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear.

Monday morning I went to New York, on my way to the Warwick Association. I was unsuccessful in finding any Baptists in New York, as I had overlooked and forgotten that I had the addresses of several brethren and sisters. The next day I started for the Warwick Association. Finally I was invited to go with the Middletown people to that place, and spent Saturday and Sunday with them, and they honored me as one of their own family. Here I met sister Bender, a German lady, with whom I conversed some in our own language; and the dear Lord

was pleased to give us a gracious time in rehearsing the dealings of God together. On Sunday morning I spoke a little in their elegant church house; and in the afternoon Elder Hardy, from North Carolina, preached. With what feelings of love and gratitude I left that dear people I cannot express. The next morning, in company with Elders Benton Jenkins and Wm. L. Beebe, I left for the Chemung Association, and arrived the same day at Elder Vail's. Next morning we all set off for the association, and met there in good order. Then I went to a little church at Cammal, Pennsylvania, where I stayed a few days, and then started for home. I went by way of Philadelphia, stopped over Sunday, and had a refreshing little meeting in an upper room. With feelings of gratitude to all, I am bound to remember you in bonds of love.

Dear brethren, farewell.

B. GREENWOOD.

DANVILLE, N. Y., June 3, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Outside of the Scriptures, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the only exponent of my religious views, and the only source of religious intelligence that awakens an interest in my soul and brightens my hope in the worship of the saints. The late discussion of the doctrine of predestination has given me much enjoyment, especially to see the kindly spirit in which the brethren write, when they differ in their views. May the Lord preserve them from falling out by the way, and guide them into the truth. It seems to me that the communication by Elder Chick in number 11, elucidates the subject more forcibly and conclusively than anything I have ever read. Indeed, the editorials and all that has been written on the subject of God's predestinating grace and his omnipotence in the salvation of sinners, has been interesting and instructive to me, when applied to my understanding; for only when a ray of divine light illumines our understanding can we have any comprehension of the truth of what we read. Much of the fine spun theories of those ready writers who are in advance of the multitude, seem like "tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee;" for the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit, &c. Only by revelation of the Spirit can we know anything of the attributes of our God; and only by his Spirit can we experience his pardoning love. In haste, yours for the truth,

P. WEST.

OLIVET, Iowa, May 15, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please allow me to say that your editorial of May first, 1888, on predestination, is just as I understand it. How is it possible that those claiming to be Old School Baptists can deny the doctrine of predestination? We read, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his pur-

pose." Also, God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." I am not one who would dare find fault with God, or even undertake to find out what is not incorporated or included in the "all things." Those who are trying to find this or that (I care not what may be named) that is not worked by that God who works all things, seem to me to be bordering on blasphemy. To think for me to say that if God does this or that (I care not what may be named) he (God) would be unjust! Why, my brethren, my very heart's blood seems to chill at the thought. Limit God? prescribe God? God forbid! May I not say that darkness covereth the earth, and gross darkness the people? I feel not to enlarge, for I cannot go further, deeper nor higher than the plain reading of the Scriptures. I only can say, Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

In love,

AARON WOOD.

CHAMBLISSBURG, Va., Dec. 2, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I will pen a few lines to you this morning by way of remembrance, as I have a small remittance to make you. Perhaps it is the last time I may ever write you, as I am badly afflicted, and the chances are against my getting well, having an enlargement of the liver, or something of the kind. Suffice it to say, I have a considerable lump inwardly, which seems quite stubborn to move. I have been confined almost entirely at home this year, but not bedridden. May the Lord's will be done. May he, dear brethren, if it be his will, spare you long in this dark age to cry aloud and spare not, as the world is now full of false teachers and false doctrines. My eyes are too weak to write, and I must close.

Your unworthy brother, if not deceived,

PETER M. WRIGHT.

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WE will until further notice receive subscriptions for *new* subscribers at the following rates:

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## EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

## SOME VESSELS TO HONOR, AND SOME TO DISHONOR.

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."—2 Tim. ii. 20, 21.

Several years since an esteemed brother requested our views on this portion of the inspired word; but it has not heretofore been presented to our understanding in a way to authorize an attempt to comply with that request. In submitting these remarks it is not claimed that we are inspired to say all that could be said profitably on the subject; but we do desire to be led by the Spirit to comprehend in some measure the truth as it is contained in the text. Without such guidance no finite mind can correctly interpret the testimony of Jesus as it is revealed in the inspired Scriptures; but when it is the pleasure of God to show these hidden mysteries to the weakest babes, they are as fully qualified to receive that revelation as is the most favored angel that dwells in the presence of the eternal throne. When blessed with such manifestation of divine truth there is no presumption in those little ones declaring the words which are thus given to them. The truth of God is just as precious in the trembling voice of the conscious sinner as when proclaimed by the divinely commissioned heavenly host of angelic spirits. The value of the message is in the word itself, and not in the messenger by whom it is sent. The bread and flesh which nourished Elijah by the brook Cherith, derived no value from the unclean ravens by whom the Lord sent it to his servant.—1 Kings xvii. 6.

In the examination of the text under consideration it is necessary to observe the connection in which it is recorded. Timothy was a minister called and qualified of God to preach the gospel of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus; and the instruction and admonition given to him is for the profit of all who are called to that solemnly important work. In the preceding portion of this epistle, Paul as inspired by the Holy Ghost, has specified some of the forms of opposition which must be encountered by the faithful minister of Christ. Prominent among these is the fact that they must each be individually "partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God." Notice particularly that these afflictions are not according to the power of the

enemies of the truth. It is for the assurance of their faith that they are told that all their afflictions are measured and definitely limited by the omnipotence of the God of their salvation. By this they are shown the love of their Redeemer in giving the fellowship of his sufferings to those whom he has called to be his disciples. Since they are not afflicted at the will of their enemies, it is strong consolation in all their sufferings to know that the love of God is attested by every grief which is given them to endure. So after speaking of the opposition which meets the saints both from external enemies and from the distrust and unbelief which war in their own members, Paul reminds Timothy of the power of God by which Jesus was raised from the dead according to that gospel in which Paul suffered trouble as an evil doer even unto bonds; "but the word of God is not bound." Therefore Paul endured all things for the elect's sakes, that they might obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This does not authorize the doctrine that the eternal salvation of the saints is left dependent upon the contingency of their ability to obtain it, whether by merit of their own or by the assistance of the apostles or any other creature of God. They are expressly designated as "the elect of God," for whose sakes Paul endured all things. He refers to that faithful sinner who declares the perfect unity of the saints with their Lord in his death and in his life; in his suffering and reigning; and even that if we deny him he will also deny us; but with all this the fact is still unchanged that "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." Of these things Timothy is directed to put them to whom he ministered in remembrance, "charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." In studying to show himself "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," it was needful that Timothy should "shun profane and vain babblings," whose pernicious tendency is explicitly declared, even to the denial of the essential truth of the resurrection. Then attention is called to the permanent seal by which is established the firm basis of all the hope of the saints. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." This wonderful and divine seal always marks the work of our God. It never was and never can be counterfeited. The enemies of the gospel of Christ have often attempted to imitate it; but the nearest they ever have come to it was to understand its assurance as a cloak for continuing in sin. Unless the confidence in the doctrine of the

final safety of the saints produces the desire to "depart from iniquity," it is not the genuine seal by which the foundation of God is always designated. Every one who bears that peculiar mark of seeking to "depart from iniquity," is sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of final deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the full liberty of the sons of God in everlasting day. All who still love sin will find in this truth an excuse for doing evil. Since this seal is impressed by the Spirit of God it can never fail to correctly mark all who have received it. Proceeding in this connected chain of solid truth, our text is introduced as an illustration.

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." This illustration is not of the church as delivered from the conflict with wickedness and temptation, but as she exists in her subjection to the vanity and strife of this world of sin. When she shall be fully conformed in all her members to the glorious image of her Redeemer there will be no difference among the members, who as vessels of mercy shall be each and all thus perfectly conformed. But in her visible manifestation as organized by the authority of our Lord, and standing upon the foundation of the prophets, Christ as her Chief Corner Stone, there are all the differences represented in the text. Yet these are not to be discerned so much in the several persons constituting the membership of the church as in the different conditions in which the same individual may be found at different times in his experience. An example of this may be seen in the case of the apostles Paul and Peter. On the day of Pentecost, as he spoke the words indited by the Holy Ghost, the most gorgeous vessel of gold would fail to represent the honor with which Peter was clothed. But when he gave evidence of his vile cowardice and ingratitude in denying the Lord, he certainly appeared as a vessel of worthless wood, or crumbling earth. So, when Paul could glory in his infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon him, he reflected all the radiance of divine holiness; but when he sought to dissemble in compliance with the cowardly suggestion of his Jewish brethren, he appeared in a dishonorable light.—See Acts xxi. 20-40. Perhaps if he had been told when withstanding Peter for his dissimulation, that he himself would soon do the same, he would have been unable to credit the statement. But it was as needful for him to learn his own weakness as it was for Peter to be converted from his self-confidence. In this application of the illustration in the text the use for both such vessels as are designed for honor and such as are designed

for dishonor, is manifest. It was not for the gratification of the malice of Satan that Peter was given into his power that he might sift him as wheat. Without that experience the usefulness of the apostle in strengthening the brethren would have been very much less than it was after he had been thus controverted from his vain trust in his own strength. Yet the weakness displayed in this denial of his Master is not a creditable exhibition of Peter's character. In no other sense can we understand that any vessels belonging to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ can be represented by those vessels in a literal house which are designed to dishonor. To apply the comparison as between the individual members of the church would not harmonize with the direction which requires that in lowliness of mind each shall esteem other better than themselves.—Phil. ii. 3. It would also tend to develop a disposition to seek occasion for fault-finding among the saints. But when they are led by the true motive of love to seek the restoration of an erring brother, it will always be "in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."—Gal. vi. 1.

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." It is clearly inconsistent to apply this expression to those who are represented in the Scriptures as being dead. Such characters certainly are incapable of even desiring to be purged from any kind of pollution. But in accordance with the application of the illustration as suggested in reference to the preceding verse, it is consistent that living subjects of divine grace should be exhorted and admonished to "shun profane and vain babblings," and to "depart from iniquity." In obedience to such exhortation the saints do purge themselves from these evil things to which Paul has referred in the foregoing portion of this epistle. When they yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, they are sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh they must reap that corruption which is the fruit of such sowing. In this course they fail to purge themselves from those heresies and corruptions against which they are admonished in this connection. But when they deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, they do purge themselves from all those pollutions, and manifest the glory of God in their walk and conversation. Then they are fitly represented by that vessel of gold which is sanctified and meet for the master's use. The saints are "sanctified by God the Father" in that election of grace in which they were chosen in Christ "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." In that sanctification they are set apart as



She was born June 12th, 1825, and was married to Albert Brown July 5th, 1847, by whom she had a number of children, who lived to grow up and care for her in her declining years. She was baptized by Elder L. P. Cole, and joined the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa in 1880 or 1881. She was a worthy member, and delighted to meet with her brethren and sisters and hear them tell of their joys and sorrows. Her mind was buoyed up during her sickness by the presence of her Savior, and hymn 991 of Beebe's Collection was a great comfort to her. We are left to mourn the loss of her presence and her genial smile to cheer us here; but we feel to bow to the mandate of him who is too wise to err and too good to be unkind, believing our loss is her gain.

The funeral discourse was preached by Elder D. Earl, and the body was laid to rest in the cemetery at West Conesville, to await the trump of God, when the dead shall be changed, and be like Christ's glorious body, and sing his praises evermore.

D. S. ELLIOTT.

MANORKILL, N. Y.

By request, I send for insertion in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary notice of **John D. McDonald**, of Ekfrid, Ontario, son of Mr. Alexander and sister Martha McDonald, who departed this life December 23d, 1887, aged six years and nineteen days.

This is the fourth child that these people have lost by that dreadful disease, diphtheria. They have the sympathy of all the church and community in their affliction. Little John was an interesting boy, and is sorely missed by his loving parents and relatives.

WM. POLLARD.

**DIED**—At the residence of his parents in New Castle, Delaware, July 7th, 1888, **George Alfred Hance**, only child of J. Alfred and Sarah R. Hance, and grandson of Elder E. Rittenhouse, aged fourteen months.

SARAH R. HANCE.

RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

H. A. Buswick 2, Tabitha Lucas 2, Mrs. Annie Rice 2, Dr. D. P. McArthur 2, Mrs. R. J. Turner 2, Joseph M. Mercer 2, John Lord 2 50, John McArthur 2 50, E. P. Morton 2 50, Whitney & Emmett 2, Elder F. M. McLeroy 6 75, Mrs. F. A. Land 2 50.—Total \$30 75.

CHURCH HISTORY DEBT OF \$2000.

CONTRIBUTIONS DURING JUNE.

ALABAMA—J. D. Barnes 4, Mrs. J. H. Purifoy 1, S. M. Calhoun 1.

GEORGIA—S. H. Starr 1, Mrs. S. A. Whitesides 1, J. F. Barfield 1, Mrs. Nancy Hitchcock 1, Chas. Ivey 2, J. T. Copeland 2, Henry Marsh 1, W. W. Williams 50c.

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LOUISIANA—B. Thigpen 1 50.

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PENNSYLVANIA—John and Ruth Carson 3.

TEXAS—R. J. Shaddock 2, Wm. Kemp 2, F. G. Culpepper 2, Elder Wm. Logan 1, D. E. Shanks 1.

WASHINGTON TER.—Wright Rushing 2 50.

ONTARIO, CANADA—S. McDonald 1.

Total..... \$ 94 40

Total previously published.... 179 00

Grand total to date.....273 40

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Des Moines River Association is to convene with Greens Grove Church, three miles northwest of Marion and four miles north of Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., Iowa, at the residence of W. S. Gott, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1888, and Monday following.

Those coming on the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & St. Paul R. R. will be met at Cedar Rapids. Those coming on the Chicago & Northwestern R. R. will be met at the same place. Those coming on the Chicago, Milwaukee & Council Bluffs R. R. will be met at Marion. Those coming on the Illinois Central R. R. will be met at Robin, two and one-half miles from the place of meeting. We wish all lovers of truth to visit our association.

W. S. GOTT.

THE Spoon River Association is to meet with New Hope Church, on Friday before the first Sunday in September (August 31st), and continue three days.

Greenbush is the place of meeting. St. Augustine and Avon, on the C., B. & Q., and Roseville, on their R. I. Division, are stations to stop at, and also Berwick, on the Iowa Central.

I. N. VANMETER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held this year with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, August 31st, 1888, and continuing three days. All that have a mind to come and meet with us at that time are invited to do so, for we shall be glad to see you. There will be teams at North Berwick depot on Thursday, the day before the meeting, to take all that come to the place of meeting. We now expect Elders Purington and Chick to be with us through the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will, the Lord willing, convene with the New Valley Church, on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1888, continuing three days.

Trains on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. will be met at Point of Rocks, Maryland, on Tuesday. Trains on the Washington & Ohio R. R. will be met at Leesburg, Virginia, on Tuesday. Trains leave Washington City at 9:00 a. m. and 4:45 p. m. Alexandria at 9:07 a. m. and 4:50 p. m. We would respectfully request all to come on the morning trains. We invite our brethren, sisters and friends to attend our meeting.

E. V. WHITE.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Caesar's Creek Church, Greene County, Ohio, on Friday before the third Sunday in September (14th), 1888, and continue the two following days.

Brethren and friends coming by rail from the south, west and north will come to Xenia, Ohio, and there change cars and take the Dayton, Fort Wayne & Chicago R. R. for Jamestown. Those coming from Washington C. H. will come on the same road to Jamestown, where they will be met by the brethren and con-

veyed to places of entertainment and to the meeting. Trains arrive at Jamestown at 9:53 a. m. and 5:25 p. m. from Xenia. Those coming in their own conveyance will call on brethren John and Jeremiah Stevens, near where the meeting will be held. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and a special invitation to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order. Come on Tuesday before the meeting.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE Concord Association of Regular Baptists, by permission of the Lord, will meet with the Otter Creek Church, on Wednesday, September 5th, 1888, at 10 o'clock sharp, and continue three days, at brother Enoch Hall's, five miles northwest of Girard, and five miles southwest of Virden, Illinois.

Those coming on the cars will come to Girard, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. Those coming from the south or the southeast should arrive on the evening trains on the 4th, as the north and west bound trains will not be in time on the 5th for the meeting. Evening trains' time at Girard, Chicago & St. Louis R. R., going north, 7:57. Those coming from the south and northwest will be met on the morning of the meeting, September 5th. South bound train on the C., A. & St. L. R. R. arrives at Girard daily at 7:42 a. m. Jacksonville Southeastern R. R., going south, 7:40. At said times trains will be met.

In behalf of Otter Creek Church.

S. R. BOGGESS, Church Clerk.

THE Western Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with the North Cedar Church, two miles northeast of Attica, Marion Co., Iowa, on Saturday before the second Sunday in September (8th), and continue in session three days.

Those coming from the east will be met at Knoxville Friday noon. Train from the west at 4:25 p. m. Those coming at other times will inquire for Robert Bacon. Ministering brethren especially invited.

THOMSON BRIDGES.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri will, the Lord willing, meet with the church called Three Forks of Nodaway, at the Union meeting-house, in Page County, Iowa, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Hopkins, ten miles southeast of the place of meeting, on Thursday noon. Also, there will be teams at Morsman, a station four miles west of the place of meeting, on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

TOMAS SHEARER.

THE Lebanon Association of Regular Predestinarian or Primitive Baptists will, the Lord willing, convene with the Lebanon Church, Henry Co., Ind., on Friday before the third Saturday in August (17th), 1888, and continue three days, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m.

Those coming from the north, over the Ft. Wayne & Cincinnati Road, will stop at Springport, and those from the south at Mt. Summit, where they will be met. Those coming from the east and west will come over the O. I. & W. and the Pan Handle to New Castle, and inquire for Peter Coble. Come on all trains on Thursday and on the early trains Friday morning.

PETER COBLE, Clerk.

INFORMATION is hereby given to all who may wish to attend the Highland Association of the Regular Predestinarian Baptists, that by an arrangement, a change has been made in the place of holding the

same. Therefore the said association will be held with the Salem Church, Mooney's School-House, four and one-half miles west of Sebree, Webster Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1888.

Those coming by railroad will be met on Thursday evening and Friday morning at Sebree with teams to convey them to the place of meeting. All Old School Baptists are cordially invited to attend.

T. H. BARKER.

THE forty-eighth annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, will convene with the Providence Church, Trimble Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888, and continuing three days.

Those coming east by rail will stop at Turner's Station, and those from the west at Campbellsburgh, on the Louisville & Cincinnati Short Line R. R., where they will be cared for, on Thursday and Friday. A cordial invitation is given to ministering brethren and all lovers of the truth.

E. F. RANSELL, Clerk.

THE Rock Spring Association of Regular Baptists is to be held with Mount Pleasant Church, in Carter Co., Ky., to commence on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888.

Said church is situated about three miles from Olive Hill. All Primitive Baptists are invited to attend who believe in the doctrine of predestination, election, particular atonement and salvation by grace; but we have no fellowship for those who hold the doctrine of general atonement and conditional salvation.

Brethren of the Primitive or Old School order attending our association will get off the train at Olive Hill, and inquire for brethren Adam Wallace or Henry Hicks, and they will be taken care of.

L. A. THORNBERRY, Clerk.

THE first session of the Roxbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Batavia Kill, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 5th and 6th, 1888, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m.

All lovers of truth are welcome to participate in the coming meeting, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

Those coming by public conveyance from Roundout or Kingston and way will stop at Roxbury, and from Hobart or Stamford at the same place, where the trains will be met from both ways, both morning and evening.

WM. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Mt. Gilead Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with the Mt. Gilead Church, two and one-half miles east of Hersman, Brown Co., Ill., on Wednesday before the second Sunday in August (8th), 1888, and continue in session three days.

Trains from the east will be met at the Wabash depot at Hersman, at 8:30 p. m., Tuesday, and 9:15 a. m., Wednesday; from the west, at 6:02 p. m., Tuesday, and 6:12 a. m., Wednesday. Those coming at other times will inquire for brethren D. W. Owens, Jas. Harper or John Jackson.

NATHAN PERRY.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet four miles north of Flannagan in Livingston Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by the Illinois Central R. R. will change cars at Kankakee Junction, and stop at Falannagan. Those coming by the Santa Fe R. R. will stop at Dana. Those coming from the west will have to change cars at Ancona, and stop at Dana. There will be means of conveyance to each place to take those attending to places of entertainment. A cordial in-

visitation is given to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Baptists will meet, the Lord permitting, with Plum Creek Church, six miles north-west of Winchester, Scott Co., Ill., at 10 o'clock a. m., on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1888. Brethren from a distance are cordially invited to meet with us. Those coming from the east or west on the Wabash R. R., will be met with conveyances at Bluff City on Saturday morning, about 8 o'clock, trains arriving. Those from the north or south on the C. B. and Q. R. R., will be met at Winchester on Friday and Saturday at noon.

G. W. MURRAY, Mod.  
GILES REEDER, Clerk.

### YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY Meeting is to be held with the Sugar Creek Church, in Putnam Co., Ohio, on the second Sunday and Saturday before in September. We invite all Old School Predestinarian Baptist brethren to visit us, and all ministers that can come. Those coming from the east, north and south will change cars at Columbus Grove and come to Rimer, where they will be cared for; and those coming from the west will come to Delphos, change cars, and come to Rushmore or to Rimer.

C. G. MILLER.

THE Yearly Meeting at Bryn Zion is appointed the first Saturday and Sunday in August, and probably Monday also; Saturday at 2 p. m. A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends from abroad; and whosoever will, turn in and abide with us, for we may be profitable to each other.

E. RITTENHOUSE, Pastor.

### TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THERE will be a Two Days Meeting held with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in August.

Trains on the Washington & Ohio R. R. will be met at Herndon Station on Friday. Trains leave Washington City at 9:00 a. m. and 4:45 p. m. Leave Alexandria at 9:07 a. m. and 4:50 p. m. We want the Lord's people to come and see us.

E. V. WHITE.

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The Entire Average Expenses, including Books, are about Seventy Dollars per Session of Twenty Weeks. This amount should be paid half in advance, and half at the middle of the Session.

#### CALENDAR.

Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888.

Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.

Spring Session begins Monday, January 21st, 1889.

Spring Session ends Friday, June 7th, 1889.

Vacation—One week at Christmas.

For further information address

SYLVESTER HASSELL, A. M.,  
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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1888. NO. 16.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWBURY, Ontario, Canada, July 14, 1888.

DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD:—After some delay, I feel I can no longer neglect writing something in reply to your welcome letter. Since the time that I last saw you in New Jersey, and had some conversation with you concerning the things of our Lord Jesus Christ, how often have you been in my mind; and as the time glided by, I began to wonder if I should ever hear from you again. I was therefore agreeably surprised to receive your letter; and as I read your communication I felt within my soul a sacred pleasure in the thought that it is evident that you are one of God's dear children, and that he has been dealing with you as our Father in heaven dealeth with all his children.—Heb. xii. 5-12.

"How strange is the course that a christian must steer,  
How perplexed is the path he must tread."

All the way it is a way that we know not, and paths that we have not known.—Isa. xlii. 16. We do not see a step before us; we know not whether on the morrow gloomy, trying, painful things may be our lot, or whether bright and soul-reviving scenes may arise; but all shall work, and be, and end, according to the pleasure of the Lord our God. "We walk by faith, not by sight." This kind of walking belongs to those who are born of the Spirit. Being born again, they thus by birth enter the kingdom, and henceforth they walk in the kingdom of God by faith, in the footsteps of the flock. "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there."—Isa. xxxv. 8-10. There are in the world many religious talkers and religious walkers. It is of small consequence whether they claim to be Calvinists or Arminians, if destitute of God's grace; for "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."—1 Cor. ii. 11, 12. If we, dear sister, are thus favored, happy are we; and notwithstanding all our fear, misgiving, questioning from without and within, have we not a hope most

precious, that we are numbered among those who have found grace in the eyes of the Lord, in Jesus Christ our Savior? For "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John i. 17. Well may the apostle Peter, speaking by the Holy Spirit, say, "Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious."—1 Peter ii. 7. But the multitude of religious talkers and walkers of which we were speaking, can talk many of them fluently enough in their own language, but it is not the "pure language."—Zeph. iii. 9. They have not the lips of truth.—Prov. xii. 19. They are not of the nation that keepeth the truth.—Isa. xxvi. 2. But their tongue speaketh "perverse things," "lying words." They call the proud happy, call evil good, and good evil. They put darkness for light, and light for darkness. They put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. Their speech betrayeth them; for though they try to pronounce terms and words that are spoken by God's children in his kingdom, they cannot pronounce them aright. In their mouth it has not signification according to the truth. And as the ear trieth words, so those to whom God has given "ears to hear" are able, sooner or later, to discern. Notwithstanding all their efforts in mimicing, they cannot speak the Jews' language.—Neh. xiii. 24. Their walking is like their talking. They are not "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, therefore the way of peace with God they know not; though they vainly talk about sinners making their peace with God. This no sinner ever did. There is only one who ever made peace with God; that is, Jesus Christ, through the blood of his cross.—Col. i. 20; Eph. ii. 14. And thus we are reconciled to God, at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. But they in their religion take long strides, and in the eyes of the world appear to run well, and altogether outstrip in the race the poor and needy child of God, who oft is found hobbling and limping and lame and faint, yet by the grace of God pursuing.—Judges viii. 4. Following hard after God, as dear children, with many sighs, many lamentations, but wonderfully and divinely sweetened with notes of sacred melody to the praise of the Lord our Shepherd. For these lame ones are enabled by their God to "leap like the hart" for joy, and to "take the prey." Thus we see "the race is not to the swift, nor

the battle to the strong." Zion's children are shod with shoes of heavenly workmanship; and when we see them thus shod, we are able a little to enter into the signification of the Holy Spirit in the words recorded in Solomon's Song, vii. 1, "How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter." Carnal religionists, walking in the vain show of the sparks they themselves have kindled, delusively believe their way to be right, that they are on the sure and direct road to heaven; but their way is not the "one way" wherein all the heirs of the everlasting covenant walk. This is the "path that no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen," but is known and walked in by those who are taught of the Lord, from the least unto the greatest of them. The Lord has said by the mouth of his apostle Paul, "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7. Even so it is now. O the depths of grace to a poor sinner like me! Is not our heart humbled in adoring praise to the ever-blessed God for his surprising, surpassing mercy to us, poor, sinful creatures? I do confess that my very heart at times is overcome by the thought, the wonderful thought, that the Lord God hath loved me with an everlasting love; and my heart at such a time exclaims, "Eternity will fail to prove the vast immensity of love," the love of God to me; that love which in the fullness of time, the appointed time, burst forth and delivered my soul, redeemed me from all iniquity, and shed abroad its saving beams upon a guilty rebel's head.

"Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die."

Dear sister, you speak of trouble and sorrow, of the chastening hand of the Lord. You feared that you were not being led by the gracious hand of the Lord, but had been left to wander all alone, in a "solitary way." And then you say, "I wanted to be chastened, because I know if without chastisement I could not be numbered among the children; but I never dreamed that it would come to me in a way that I would feel as keenly as if my earthly father inflicted punishment. I wanted to direct the rod, just where and how to fall. In short, I wanted to be made good and humble, and kept so in some nice, easy way, that would not hurt my pride." I know something of what you here relate. I

have felt that spirit in me (of which you speak) that would direct the Spirit of the Lord, and would presume to counsel the Lord what to do, and how to proceed; and I have found this all to arise from the most horrible rebellion to the sovereign will and pleasure of the everlasting God, our heavenly Father; and then wanting, as you, dear sister in the Lord, have expressed it, "to be made good and humble, and kept so, in some nice, easy way, that would not hurt my pride." I think I am not a stranger to such thoughts: O how vain and foolish are these thoughts of ours! The Lord our God does not deal with us in such a sham way, neither does he bring us into hypocritical humility. "He is the Rock: his work is perfect. For all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he."—Deut. xxxii. 4. All his chastenings are for "our profit."—Heb. xii. 10. "He openeth the ears of men [then we hear the rod, and who hath appointed it—Micah vi. 9], and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."—Job xxxiii. 16, 17. Jehovah's purpose is founded in his eternal wisdom, perfect in design, unalterable and certain in its execution.—Isa. xli. 11. In contrast with this, how far short do all our purposes come; and, as sinful creatures, how contrary to the thoughts of the Creator, the all-wise God.—Isa. lv. 8. The Lord, in his loving dealings with his own, withdraws them from their purpose. Often we are suffered to go so far, and then, to fulfill his own counsel concerning us, he withdraws us from our own designs, to the end that his own will, and not ours, may be done. And this the ransomed of the Lord shall at length acknowledge to be for their good, and to the everlasting praise of our adorable God. How crossing, disappointing, oftentimes are his purposes. Ours are frustrated, and by the hand, the loving, gracious, merciful, powerful hand of God, we are withdrawn from our purpose. But his purposes are ever ripening and unfolding. They are wrought out and fulfilled to his own eternal praise. O what scenes are we called to pass through and endure! We see our own projects annulled, our hopes blighted, our cherished anticipations blasted, and it may be in a few short moments blasted forever. Things turn out contrary to our forecasting. We begin to fret, to

repine, to murmur, and at length our complaints, perhaps, become loud and continual; not against the Lord. O no. We don't want to confess this; but against this and that thing, man, woman or event. We judge our lot to be hard; we become envious of the ease, happiness and prosperity of others, and we settle it down in our own minds that we are the most tried and tempted and afflicted and misused persons in the world. Though no one takes pity upon us, we will pity ourselves. If you, dear sister, have not been in such a slough, I can tell you that the poor, sinful writer has been in this mire, not once, nor twice. O what shame belongs unto me! O what confusion of face! O what horrible murmurings have issued out of my carnal nature against the providences of that God whom I have so often proved to be full of tender compassion and surpassing love to me, a guilty, undeserving worm. When we are found fretting against the providences of our God, what he has appointed for us, there is no need to deceive ourselves, to hide it from ourselves. We are fighting and murmuring against God. "He performeth the thing that is appointed for me, and many such things are with him."—Job xxiii. 14. "Appointed for me." Sufferings, tribulation, hatred of the world, afflictions, persecutions. These things, as well as those sorrows and crosses that are common to all mankind, are "appointed for me;" as much so as the joy and peace and heavenly delight that we are sometimes favored to taste, when our beloved Immanuel takes us into his house of wine, and his banner over us is love. O what comfort, what relief, has the Holy Spirit given me in seasons of heaviness, and when laboring in adversities, by speaking this divine truth in my soul that was known and believed by David when he exclaimed, "My times are in thy hand."—Psa. xxxi. 15.

The instruction of the Lord is "to withdraw man from his purpose." Could we pursue our purposes to the end, could we run unhindered in the paths that we have mapped out for ourselves, we should be shipwrecked, and would land ourselves in perdition. No matter how right our ways may seem, the end thereof are the ways of death. We are not wise enough to be our own guides. The path before us, to us is an untrodden one. Whether it shall in the future be dark or bright, joyous or sorrowful, rough or plain, straight or crooked, we fail to know; but in that path predestinated for us by God we shall walk. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."—Jer. x. 23. How comforting is it when our precious Lord speaks, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." We then may well sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want."

But it also is recorded, "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee."—Psa. xxxii. 8, 9. I fear my conduct has many times been a good deal like the horse or mule, peevish and rebellious against the leading of the Lord; very persistent in endeavoring to attain unto the fulfillment of our purposes, and we may have said in our hearts, "We will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart."—Jer. xviii. 12. Well may the Lord say, "The virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing." But for his own name's sake the Lord does not cast off his people, but in his love and in his pity he will redeem his elect from all iniquity. He knows how to frustrate our vain and earthly designs. Those that walk in pride he is able to abase. He will bring down high looks. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled. God will "withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." All the journey, forty years long, in the wilderness, was, saith the Lord, "to humble thee." What, am I so filled with pride? So possessed with vain and high notions? I find to my shame that it is so. I find this to be a bitter, bitter, O such a bitter thing, that I am a sinner. Go where I will, do what I can, in ten thousand ways and shapes, in every avenue, at every turn, I am a poor sinner, and my sin would soon reduce me to utter despair; but Jesus our Savior has, I hope, died for my sins, and has risen again for my justification. When thus favored to see Jesus by "precious faith," I can in tears of unspeakable joy sing in my heart in melodious strains unto the Lord, "The Lord is my light and my salvation." I am not in my sins, for Christ is risen. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us."—Rom. viii. 33, 34. "Blessing and honor and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. Amen." Some in the world might sneer at all this that I am writing, dear sister, and call me a fanatical enthusiast. Others, who would not want to be so unkind as to speak like this, might yet think that the picture is too highly colored, the sunshine too bright, and the apparel too gay; the background to be too black, the shame and guilt and poverty an exaggeration. O what matters it what people think or what they say? I know what I write is the truth, an indisputable fact, a real, not a dreamy and mythical, but a living experience in my soul by the power of God. That I am a vile sinner is an awful, bitter reality; and when

let down into this horrible pit and miry clay, I find my own sinfulness the bottomless pit. Its abominations I cannot, neither do I wish to, portray. The shame, the vileness that is there, O how dark, how foul, how hateful. How I loathe it. Woe, woe is me. I am a sinner. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" What sorrow and grief and bitter weeping has been my lot when the Lord has led me to see and feel what a poor sinner I am. And then, praise his name, when I taste Jehovah's pardoning mercy, prove his gracious power to save, when he takes me from the dunghill of my carnal nature, sets me up on high from my affliction, to set among his princes, and in his surpassing love fills my soul with the earnest of eternal glory, it is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Sin is so hideous, it can never be painted too black; and the love, mercy and grace of God, shining forth in the face of Jesus, Immanuel, the incarnate Word, our pen and speech must forever come short in telling half the praise. Yet though I feel and lament that I so poorly speak the praises of the precious Savior, who has done so much for me, I find I am often exclaiming,

"Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.

"But when this lisping, stammering  
tongue  
Lies silent in the grave,  
Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,  
I'll sing thy power to save."

To humble us, to withdraw us from our purpose, to bring us into that sacred, heavenly and desirable condition, that we may "walk humbly with our God," we shall find the word of the Lord fulfilled in us, "I will hedge up thy way with thorns." You, dear sister, have found it so. In the paths that we sought to go, and wherein we anticipated we should find our pleasure, we have met with thorns. Matters have turned out otherwise than we thought. Cisterns we hewed out for ourselves to hold water, out of which we promised ourselves many a sweet and refreshing draught in the future; but we have proved, and still prove, and we shall prove while we are here in the body, that they are not Fountain of living waters. They are not our God. O no indeed! They fall infinitely short, are but mere cisterns, "broken cisterns, that can hold no water."—Jer. ii. 13. Manasseh, that vessel of mercy in whom Jehovah magnified his mercy, was one who knew what thorns were in his path. Let me repeat the inspired narrative. "The Lord spake unto Manasseh, and to his people; but they would not hearken. Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria [O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in their hand is mine indignation.—Isa. x. 5], which took Manasseh among the thorns,

and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was entreated, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem, into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God."—2 Chron. xxxiii. 10-13. Here we have an illustration of the Lord's method of teaching and humbling poor sinners, his own loved and chosen people? Dare we question his sovereign right? Shall we find fault, insinuate suggestions and amendments, and think of instructing the all-wise God our Savior how to deal with his own, how to teach his children, how to lead and care for his flock? O how horrible the very thought of such a thing. And yet vile and shameful as it is to be guilty of such conduct, I fear as I look back over my life that I have not been altogether innocent. I know that in times of trial and disappointment I have been so unwise, so ill at ease under the afflicting hand of the Lord, so unreconciled to his providences, that in my murmuring I have indeed sinned, and have dared to suggest to the Lord another line of treatment, at least in his dealings with me. I have thought that some change, some other and less trying pathway, would be better for me. I do not know, dear sister, what you would call such conduct, but to me it stinks of pride. It is the very essence of rebellion. The Lord will mar and stain such pride, and such rebellious ones shall dwell in a dry land. So I have found it. The Lord speaks, "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and will speak comfortably unto her."—Hosea ii. 6-14. "I was brought low, and he helped me."—Psa. cxvi. 6. This we also can say, dear sister. It is the Lord's "way." "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive. He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up; he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory."—1 Sam. ii. 6-8. The Lord says, "I will give her the valley of Achor for a door of hope."—Hosea ii. 15. This vale of trouble (Joshua vii. 26) given to God's children is that in which an entrance is given them of a most precious hope of deliverance, of liberty, of being again restored to the royal favor of the King of glory. Jeremiah says, "Remembering mine affliction and misery, the wormwood and the gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope." And again, "He putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope."—Lam. iii. Being brought low in the dust before the Lord, through sharp trials it may

be; trials from without, and inward trials, such as only God's people know; that wonderful and gracious experience wrought in us by the mighty hand of God; and this mighty hand is the hand of compassionate mercy and everlasting love. It is the gracious and adorable God who teaches us. It is he who shows us how sinful we are, opens up to us, and most bitterly we are made to feel the plague, the naughtiness and pride of our hearts. It is his own rich and abundant grace over all our sinful ways, our repinings, and base, ungrateful conduct. Then it is that our speech is low, and as a whisper out of the dust.—Isa. xxix.

4. When thus brought low at the feet of our God, we are led to review all the way the Lord has led us, and we are constrained, like Jeremiah, to exclaim, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not: they are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." We beg of the Lord to be gracious unto us, to pardon all our guilt, to renew the sweet evidence in our heart that all our sins are cleansed away in our Immanuel's precious blood. At such a time we dread the thought of being left to our own sinful will. We long for the Lord to appear in our behalf, to show us some token for good, to take us to himself, and mould us as clay in the hands of the potter, according to his own good pleasure. Or ever we are aware, the Holy Spirit gives us to feel a sweet resting in the power and mercy of the Lord, all our care is cast upon him, while some tender words of his love drop as the honey and the honeycomb. The bitter waters are sweetened, for the Lord in his unfailing compassion has reconciled us unto himself, has brought us into perfect acquiescence to all his good pleasure concerning us. Our perplexities, afflictions, bereavements and trying providences are sanctified to our soul's profit. "Reconciled to God."—2 Cor. v. 20. O what a most precious and desirable heritage! Jehovah says, "I will give her her vineyards from thence [the wilderness], and the valley of Achor [trouble] for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth [Ex. xv.], and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."—Hosea ii. 15. In the wilderness, in the valley of sorrow, I, saith the Lord, will "speak comfortably unto her." No other one, no other power, can comfort the Lord's people in their distresses. His power, his grace, his love and mercy, revealed in their soul, can charm away our fears, quell and quiet all disturbances, put to flight all our adversaries, dispel all the gloom, revive our fainting hearts, and into our humbled, contrite minds pour the oil and wine of the new covenant. Then in the sunlight of his reconciling face we can smile upon our Lord, whose smiles have

put gladness in our heart, and in grateful melody sing, "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him." It is most blessed to believe that our God has appointed all that befalls us, that his providence disposes each event, and in all our trials we shall prove how rich is the mercy and exceeding abundant the grace of the Lord. He will bring us into a meek and lowly condition before his heavenly throne, and by his Spirit to worship him the Lord, our Lord and our salvation, in the beauties of holiness, through Jesus, our great High Priest. Sometimes we have thought we would never be highminded again; that we would never murmur; that we would live in perfect acquiescence to his sovereign will; that henceforth our life should express that divine prayer which God himself put in our heart, "Thy will be done." O that it were ever thus with me; but alas! it is not always so. I have often need to cry, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Still through grace I can sing, "His love in time past forbids me to think

He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;  
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,  
Confirms his good pleasure to help me  
quite through."

May the Lord graciously prosper you, and sanctify to your soul's welfare both prosperity and adversity, which you will see, dear sister, according to Ecclesiastes vii. 14. The Lord has "set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him." This that the Lord has "set" can never be upset. It is the unalterable appointment of our heavenly Father. O may we be able to say, "Thy will be done."

From your brother, as I hope, in Jesus,

FRED. W. KEENE.

ELMDALE, Ind., July 15, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERS:—It has been impressed on my mind for several years to write a relation of my travels, as I hope, from nature to grace; but feeling my inability to write, I have put it off from time to time. Lately it has been on my mind so much that I have concluded in my feeble way to make the attempt.

I was born near Rochesfer, Monroe Co., N. Y., June 13, 1834. I have been informed that my grandfather was a minister of the Old School Baptist Church. My father belonged to no church, but held to the doctrine of the Universalists. My mother and oldest sister were members of the New School Baptist Church, and my next oldest sister was a Methodist. I attended meeting most of the time in my youth with the last two denominations. I had serious thoughts at times on religion, but thought I was too young yet. On Feb. 2, 1854, my sister next to me in age died of consumption. She had been sick nearly a year, and we knew she could not get

well, and had become resigned to her death. She gave evidence before she died that she had met with a change, and was ready and willing to die whenever God saw fit to call her. In a short time after, we received a letter from an uncle in Michigan, stating that my oldest brother was lying very low with typhoid fever at his house. Father started immediately for the west, but when he got there my brother was dead and buried. He had him taken up and brought home to be buried in the family burying ground. He died Feb. 16th. It was a great shock to me, coming so suddenly, and my mind was on the subject of death for a long time; but finally it wore away. My health began to be poor, and my friends thought I was going as my sister did. I concluded to go west and stay there one summer, and see if a change of climate would help me. Accordingly I left my father's house in Genesee Co., N. Y., Feb. 14, 1856, for Indiana. When I reached Buffalo I learned that the railroads were blocked up with snow, but that the route through Canada was open. I took that route and reached my uncle's in Laporte Co., Ind., on the 17th. I visited there nearly four weeks, and then started in company with my cousin for Vermillion Co., Ind., where we had two uncles living. We arrived there March 12th, and visited among the friends for several days, when my cousin went back home to Laporte Co. One of my uncles and his wife belonged to the Old School Baptist Church. I had never heard any of that denomination preach, and was anxious to hear them. During that season I attended several of their meetings and two of their associations. I heard several of their preachers, and came to the conclusion that they preached a hard doctrine. I then thought that if I was going to join a church that would be my last choice. I had nothing against the people as citizens and neighbors, but the doctrine they advocated I hated and despised, and I found that the church was very unpopular with other denominations. I thought that when I married and settled down in life I would get religion and join some popular church; but as time went on I came to the conclusion that I was as good as the best members in the church. My health had steadily improved. I was now well, and thought I would stay longer in Indiana, as it was so healthy for me. I went on in my secure state until the forepart of January, 1858, when one night I went to bed, but could not sleep. My mind was wandering over my past life, when these words came to me with force, You are a great sinner. My sins like mountains began to rise up before me. I then for the first time tried to pray, but it seemed to do no good. I did not know what to do to get this trouble off my mind. I slept but little that night. The next day

I was weighed down with a load that was heavy to bear. Many a time did I go to some secret place to try to pray, but all did me no good. My prayers did not seem to rise above my head. Thus I went on, my load getting heavier and heavier. At last I thought there was mercy for every one else, but none for me; that I had sinned away my day of grace, and there was no mercy for such a wretch as I felt myself to be. I viewed myself to be a sink of sin, nothing good about me, and how could God be just and save such a sinner as I was. I could not help but acknowledge God's justice in condemning me, yet I could not help calling on God for mercy, if he could be just in pardoning such a guilty wretch as I was. I thought if I had commenced sooner, before I was so hardened in sin, there might have been some hope, but now all hope was gone from me. About this time the Methodists began a protracted meeting in the neighborhood. Soon the excitement was high, and a good many professed to have their sins pardoned, and were happy. Among them were many of my associates. I thought it might do for them, but mine was an outside case; that I was beyond the reach of hope or mercy. They tried to make me believe that there was still hope for me, and finally succeeded in getting me to the mourners' bench, to be prayed for. After they were done, I felt no better. The preacher told me if I would join the church on probation they would still pray for me, and God would answer their prayers, and my sins would be pardoned. I yielded to their desires, but went home with a heavy heart, and went to bed, but could not sleep. The next morning I arose early and went out of the house to go to some secret place to try again to pray, and the thought came to me as I went along, What good will it do for such a wretch as you are to pray? I wandered around until after the sun came up, which seemed shrouded in gloom. I thought that was the last time I should behold the sun rise, for before the next day I would be cold in death, and forever be banished from the presence of God and the glory of his power. I hardly know how I passed the day, but night finally came, and I thought I would go to meeting once more, for the last time. I went bowed down with a load that seemed would crush me into the earth. The minister preached a short discourse, and then invited sinners to come forward to be prayed for. At first I did not want to go, as I thought it would do no good, but yielded at last. I knelt down with the rest, and they prayed for us, and then commenced singing. My load was so heavy that I thought I was fast sinking down to eternal woe, when I cried, "Lord, save, or I perish." A light sprung up within me, and the first thing I knew I was on my feet, praising God. That was the hap-

piest time of my life. My heavy load was gone, and I thought I would always be happy in the Savior's love. That was the first day of March, 1858. I shall never forget the time as long as I live and am in my right mind. I never wanted to commit another sin while I lived, but wished to follow him in all his commandments. I went home with a light heart, and slept well that night. In the morning I was still happy, but before night I was in the dark. Doubts and fears arose, and I thought I was deceived, and prayed for my burden, that I might watch the closer when it left me again; but I was never able to get it. After awhile light broke in on me, and I thought I would never doubt again; but since that time I have learned different. I went on with the Methodists, and met with them every Sunday, attending class meeting and Sunday School once a week, and preaching every two weeks. I soon found they were getting along better than I was. They were so good, at least so they said in class meeting, while I thought I was getting worse and worse. I tried to get better, but the more I tried the worse I got. I became dissatisfied with them more and more every time I met with them. They were wrong, or else I was. A great many times I thought I was deceived, and that likely they were right. I read the Testament a great deal, and found that it taught baptism by immersion, while they believed in sprinkling, and preached against immersion. About the first of August I went on a visit to Laporte Co., Ind., and while there I went to hear other denominations preach, to see if they suited me any better. I was not satisfied with their preaching. The forepart of September I came home, and my uncle, aunt and others were going to the Vermillion Association, and wanted that I should go with them. I had been prejudiced against the Old School Baptists, and would not go to hear them; but now I was anxious to hear them preach, as I was dissatisfied with every one I had heard. I went with them, and when the association convened I took a seat and thought I would pay particular attention to what they preached, when, to my astonishment, they told my travels and feelings better than I could myself. I wondered how they knew what I had passed through. They seemed to be preaching right to me, and before I was hardly aware of it the three days of the association were gone. I was sorry of it, for I wanted to hear more. I then came to the conclusion that they were the true church of Christ. They looked so lovely and good that I could not help loving them; and, best of all, they preached what I believed to be the truth of God. The people that I had once hated and despised were the only ones now that I wanted to be with. How much I would have

liked to be a member of the church with them, but thought that could not be, as I was too unworthy and too bad to be with such good people. I feared I would bring a reproach on the cause of Christ. I thought I must get better before I would dare to offer myself. The Sunday before I arrived home from my visit, the Methodists took in those who had been received on probation, into full membership; and as soon as they saw me, they wanted I should be taken in. They said they would baptize me by immersion, if nothing else would do. I told them to take my name off their book, for I did not believe what they preached, and was not satisfied with them. They tried to argue the case with me, but I told them I did not want to belong to any church unless it was the Old School Baptist Church, and I was not fit to be with them. My mind was soon after exercised in regard to joining the church, but I thought I must get better before I could do that. I tried to get better, in order to join a people that I loved; but it seemed that I got worse all the time, and I gave up all hope of joining the church. I could not stay away from their meetings, but whenever there was meeting within reach I went and enjoyed it. Thus I went on until Saturday before the fourth Sunday in October, 1858. I went to Hopewell Church to meeting, and when the door was opened for members I found myself there, talking to the church. They unanimously received me, and the next day I was baptized by Elder Samuel Johnson. After being baptized, my mind was at rest on that subject, and I felt that I had done my duty, and went on my way rejoicing. Soon after that I thought I was deceived, and had deceived the church, as they did not know I was so bad; but it finally passed away, and I was in the light again. In this way I have passed thus far in life, with my doubts and fears, my bright and my dark seasons. I have to go back a little over thirty years, and take up that little hope that I trust I received then, and travel on. It is all the hope I have or expect in this life.

Brethren, do with this as you think best, and it will be all right with me.

Your unworthy brother, in hope of eternal life,

E. F. GOFF.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., July 17, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Some time since a dear sister requested me to say something upon two portions of the word, which she named together, as though they were joined together in her mind, though found in widely separated portions of the word; one being in the Old Testament Scriptures, and the other in the New. In thinking them over, I have come to see a harmony of thought in them, though they differ widely in form of

expression. One is found in the prophecy of Jeremiah, twenty-first chapter, and thirteenth verse, and is spoken, not of any Gentile nation, but of the very house of David, the royal line, and reads as follows: "Behold, I am against thee, O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, saith the Lord; which say, Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations?" And the other is in Jude, the twenty-first, twenty-second and twenty-third verses, and is also spoken to the royal line of the spiritual David, in warning and exhortation. "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." Now, while these two texts were joined in the mind of our sister, and to me also they have called up the same reflections, I would also say that the thousands of warnings and threatenings addressed to the disobedient and backsliding Israel of the old covenant, all present in substance the same thought as in the text above quoted from Jeremiah, and are equally in harmony with the verses quoted from Jude. In the text in Jeremiah, judgment is denounced against Israel, and warning is given; while in Jude, the apostle exhorts his brethren to flee from evil, and to urge others away from the fire; the word "fire," in the text in Jude, meaning the indignation of God against sin in his people, just as is presented in the text from Jeremiah. In both places we have the dealings of God with his recognized people presented; the Old Testament record being a type of what is true of the New Testament people. I think that when we read anything in the Old Testament we are bound first of all, if we wish to rightly understand it, to see how it applied to literal, fleshly Israel, and how it was literally fulfilled in their case; and then we are prepared to trace out the way in which God deals with his spiritual people, through the type. The type and the substance must agree. They were God's people then, chosen and separated from the rest of mankind. As his own chosen and separated people, they were dealt with according to the good pleasure of their God. He did not deal so with any other people. He did not so deal with them to make them his people, but because they were his people, and that he might reveal himself through them. Now, every true believer belongs to God, as his purchased heritage. God deals now with each such one as a child. This does not make any man a child of God, nor cause him to be chosen of God, but it does manifest God's will through them. Just as

God, in the type, warned, rebuked, chastised and turned his face away from national Israel for their disobedience, yet they remained still his; so he warns, rebukes, chastises and turns his face away from his spiritual people for their disobedience, they remaining still his own. As under the old covenant, the willing and obedient did eat the good of the land, and were blessed in all that could minister to their comfort and happiness; so now, they who take the yoke of Christ upon them, find rest to their souls. It is still true that the willing and obedient eat the good of the land, while the disobedient are beaten with many stripes.

The mistake of thousands in treating upon these warnings, reproofs, admonitions and records of God's judgment against sin is that whereas they always belong to the children of God, those who are his by living faith in Christ Jesus, they apply them to those who are not the people of God as well, making no vital distinction between the one and the other. A second mistake is, that they carry these rewards and punishments, for obedience and disobedience, on into the next world, instead of confining them to time and to this state of existence, as they are meant to be. A third mistake has sometimes been made in the opposite direction. This has grown out of opposition to the other two false positions. In opposing the idea that natural men are admonished and warned, and that eternal blessings or misery depend upon our obedience or disobedience, some have gone so far as to look with suspicion upon any attempt to warn or reprove or rebuke even the people of God; or to declare to them that in keeping God's commandments they shall find a great reward; or that they shall be chastised for disobedience. Some have directly said that warning, reproof and exhortation had no place in the gospel. Arminianism has no place in the gospel, and neither does idleness or carelessness of life. The whole matter is summed up in these words of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls." Here is free rest for the heavy laden sinner in Jesus. Then having received this rest, bearing his yoke follows, and thus the second rest is found. "The wicked" among God's people "are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, whose waters are continually casting up mire and dirt." A dear old brother in Maine once said to me, just after I had begun speaking in the name of the Lord, "If you will carefully notice, you will see that fully one-third of all the epistles are taken up with admonitions, reproofs and warnings. No one can have a better rule for his ministry than this. Do not

neglect exhortation or admonition." In harmony with this the great apostle to the Gentiles said to the young man Timothy, "Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine," or teaching, for here the word "doctrine" means teaching. The word "exhortation" means a calling upon; incitement, persuasion, importunity.

With these general remarks I wish to turn to the two texts themselves, and suggest a few thoughts concerning them. In the text in Jeremiah two things are seen charged against the house of David; first, that they had departed from the Lord in heart and spirit and life; and, second, that they boasted in their strength, and defied any power to come down against them. They had forgotten God; they had ceased to look for their mercies at his hand; and now they had ceased to fear his judgments. They had come to pour contempt upon all his words to them through Moses and through the prophets. They had waxed fat and kicked. They had grown rich and strong and powerful, and they feared no foe. They left God out of the calculation altogether. They credited him not with their blessings, and they feared not his chastisements. Now these were not Egyptians, nor Canaanites, nor Chaldeans, who knew not God, but his own people, to whom he had spoken and was still speaking, and to whom he had shown his covenant. This was the people who stood as a type of the true, chosen, spiritually circumcised, believing people of God. We are not therefore to give this away to the uncircumcised in heart and ears, but to learn from it lessons for ourselves, if indeed we are the people of God.

In the connection of this text in Jeremiah we are told what were the evidences that they had forgotten God. They had not executed judgment and righteousness. They had not delivered the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor. They had done violence to the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and had shed innocent blood. It is always so. When God is forgotten, and man trusts in his own strength, and begins to exalt his sanctity and superior holiness, the cry of the poor and the oppressed, of the widow and the orphan, begins to be heard in the land. Outward forms of religious worship were never more abundantly nor more zealously carried on than at this very time in Israel's history. As zeal in religious forms and show increased, mercy and judgment were pushed out of sight. It is true to-day, that the more zealously forms and ceremonies and fine temples for worship are multiplied, the more the faces of the poor are ground, and the less love and pity for the needy there is. A great zeal for God and religion often dwells in perfect seeming harmony with all manner of extortion and selfishness. All this is hateful and abominable to

God. This is the spirit of the world. We need expect nothing better from the world. But how about those who are known as the people of God? We must remember there is danger for us also. The world may go on in its wickedness, but how about those whom the Lord loves? If they thus err, shall they not find that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God? Will he not be a fire to them? This is his promise. He says in the verse following the text, "I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings; I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and it shall devour all round about it." God will punish his people for their pride, vain glory, forgetfulness of him, injustice and unbrotherliness to his loved ones, and also for any wrong done to the stranger. This is the lesson taught in the text in the prophecy of Jeremiah.

Now, turning to the text in Jude, we see that precisely the same thing is implied in every sentence and word. The very fact of warning and exhortation implies blessings to be gained on the one hand, and evils to be shunned on the other. This is true of all exhortation in the New Testament, as well as of this in Jude. I do not propose taking up and considering each clause of this text, but simply desire to call attention to two special thoughts; first, "keep yourselves in the love of God;" and, second, have compassion upon and save others. With regard to the first thought, "keep yourselves in the love of God," I will say that I do not think it needful to spend much time in proving what I am sure all Old School Baptists believe, viz., that this does not mean that we are to, of ourselves, hold ourselves in such a position of obedience and righteousness as that God can continue to love us. Surely he who has loved his people with an everlasting love cannot be supposed now to cease to love them by any possibility whatever. Because he had loved them with an everlasting love, he drew them from nature's darkness and death to his own light and life. Surely, now that so great a work has been done for them when they were enemies, he will not let them perish, when as children they are disobedient. The direct testimony of the word is, that though he chastises for their disobedience, he does not take away his love from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Jesus himself said, "I give unto them [those "who hear my voice"] eternal life, and they shall never perish." I will not further argue this truth. The Bible in its whole tenor teaches it, and all poor, needy sinners love it and rejoice in it.

But still there is a sense in which these words are true. With these words, and to my mind showing their meaning, comes up the language of the Savior, which we would do well to carefully note. In John xv. 10 he said, "If ye keep my command-

ments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." Is not this equivalent to saying, "Keep yourselves in the love of God?" But how? The answer is, By keeping his commandments, even as did the Master also by keeping his commandments. No one would dare assert that the love of the Father for the Son, or of the Son for the Father, depended upon the obedience of Jesus. Rather the obedience would be regarded as the result of this mutual love. But, by keeping the commandments of God, in heart and life it was abidingly evident that he loved God and that God loved him. He experimentally and feelingly abided in the love of God. God constantly communed with him, and gave him tokens of his love. He also had the testimony that he loved God. Could it have been possible that the holy Son of God should not have kept his Father's commandments, then he could not have said, "I abide in his love." Disobedience would have shown lack of love to God, and the displays of God's love to him would have been withheld. I say if disobedience could have been possible, but it was not possible; therefore, he always abided in the love of God. There was no "if," in this case. But he does, when he speaks of our obedience, find room for the "if." "If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love." This is just (or even) as was true of him. In keeping his commandments we have the evidence that we love him, and this is sweet to know; and besides, just as really and truly as a father smiles upon and is affectionate in manner toward his child, who loves and obeys him, so our heavenly Father visits us when obedient with manifold inward heartfelt tokens of his love and favor. It was thus that he dealt with Israel in the type. It is thus that he deals with us. God does not change in his love to us, but the changes are in us. It is impossible for the disobedient child to enjoy or to feel that love. Now this is the sense in which I understand the words in Jude. The connection of them seems to me in harmony with this view. This is in harmony also with the text in Jeremiah. In the disobedience of Israel they did not keep themselves in the love of God, they did not abide in his love. In this connection in Jude many are spoken of who do wickedness, and thereby separate themselves. Now Jude exhorts his brethren to the opposite course. In other words obey God, and so shall you experience joy and peace and have communion with him, and he will manifest himself to you. It is sin that separates us from God. I do not mean the unregenerate, but the people of God. This is the testimony of God himself. "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy that

it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." It is in this sense that I understand the words. This includes all that rests upon believers in the way of obligation to God or to each other. If we neglect these things we shall soon have to lament the hidings of his face. Who does not know that this is so?

The second thought is "the saving of others, the pulling of them out of the fire." The love of God shed abroad in the heart does not tend to selfishness. It fills the heart with love to others. It causes a desire to do good to others. If we have fallen into the fire and been burned we shall want to save others from it. If a certain course has wrought me evil, or I have been told it will work evil, I shall not only desire to avoid it myself, but shall try to save all that I love from going in that way. I should have but little love to God or man if I would not. As Jude here says, I shall fear for the erring, lest they fall into the fire and suffer, and shall pull them out of the fire. I shall hate even the garment that is spotted by the flesh. It will be impossible for me to see my brethren going in the dangerous way and keep still. I shall feel that I must warn them and try to save them. Surely I need not argue to prove all this. Every brother or sister knows that they cannot do otherwise to those that they love. A mother would do the same for her child. How often did the prophets, with earnest cryings and tears, warn Israel, their own people! How often did Paul warn the churches! In just the same sense in which we are told to keep ourselves in the love of God, are we told to save others. What a fearful fate it is to fall into the fire! Yet Jude says that is just what it is for a child of God to sin. Paul says sin is as fearful a thing as is a dead body. He calls it a "body of death." We find daily "that if we live after the flesh we shall die." Cain asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Let us never try to cover up our indifference or neglect of our erring brethren by the question of Cain, lest it be said to us that the voice of our brother's blood cries from the ground against us. Can we say as did the apostle, "I am clear from the blood of all men?"

In conclusion, there is one expression of Jude that I feel to rejoice in. He says that God is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. The way of which I have been speaking is truly great, and we are not sufficient for these things; but our God is able. Here is our hope and encouragement; and this is sufficient for the weakest. I trust these reflections may not be profitless either to the sister who requested them

or to others. At least, I have had some comfort in writing them.

As ever, your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK.

#### EVIDENCES OF FAITH.

"ONE of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." Every true and faithful witness must, of necessity, sometimes shock the sensibilities of the timid, or fail to express the "whole counsel of God." Indeed, when I hear criticisms of the language of the ministry, I am often led to wonder why the critics prefer false delicacy to truth. Paul only used the testimony of Cretians against their own national people; but I believe God's children were amongst them; for Peter's evidence was that "In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." And as the "due times" were indicated by the opposition to truth, and the danger of incoming heresy into the churches, and for a perpetual landmark for record in church history and ministerial example, he uses unmistakable plainness of speech, and even personates the particular order, sect or denomination to whom he refers. I can, then, heartily indorse the true and apostolic mode of preaching, generally followed by Old School Baptists, in their faithful denunciations of all orders, sects and denominations whatever, except the church of God. It is for her warning that faithful ministers are placed upon her walls, who shall not hold their peace day nor night, no matter what oppositions they meet, till all the times of God are accomplished. And to that people I wish to say, I think that it is now a dark night time to the general assembly of the saints. There are so many timid ones, whose faith seems based too much upon the visible, tangible and comprehensible evidences of the temporal state of visible membership in the churches, rather than the stability of that power that first built the church and led them to it; or, in other words, like the Cretians, who taught a lie, or that circumcision was the only mark of God's favor. So we find now some lingering remnants of their true nature among the worldly wise, who have taken the name of Baptists, and yet build upon that popularity that is favorable to worldly pride; hence we see that such are ever ready to caution the faithful minister of Jesus against the use of offensive words; for it is thought to scare away the congregation. Although Paul was preaching to Titus in a private way, he also failed not in his teaching to be equally plain at all times and under all circumstances. He names the parties he intends, and shows by "their own prophets" that the Cretians were liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. So to-day there is an equal need for faithfully ex-

posing all that are without the true church. There may be some who are visibly in the church of God as here organized, but spiritually they are without. "For without are dogs and sorcerers and whoremongers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Therefore I know of no rule by which to judge a tree but by its fruits; and God's prophet said, referring to God's children, these are "children that will not lie." Here we see the two classes of people specifically described—lovers of lies, and lovers of truth. Let them be wherever they may, in the world or in the organized church, their true character remains the same. Love is the fulfilling of the law; and God's people love his law, as David said; and it matters not how severely that law may appear to them, they love it still; and as God is truth, they love truth as they love God. Solomon said, "Buy the truth, and sell it not."

I once heard a lady, who claimed to be a Baptist, say that she hoped her brother, whom she expected to visit her, would not come till after the association, for he belonged to another order of people. She was very tender of his feelings. I felt that her love was greater for him than for the church or the truth. While our aim should never be for the especial offense of the world, we should not wish to please the world, nor accommodate our religion to their feelings. The evidences of true faith are best found in that soul who can forsake father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and all worldly friends, that he or she may have the blessed companionship of Jesus and his poor and despised people who love the truth. This is to them greater riches in poverty than all the treasures of Egypt, or the social popularity of the Cretians. Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels."—Matt. viii. 38.

"This witness is true," Paul said. But he did not prize the source whence it came. So we to-day can hear many natural truths from the world at large, and even false churches and their prophets, or ministry; but while we accept such natural truth, we cannot subsist upon it as spiritual food. It is but as a shadow to the natural truth that preceded it. It is not uncommon for the false prophets of this day to speak the truth of their own people. Sam. Jones is said to have pictured all denominations as scarcely moral; and I heard a leading member of the M. E. Church (a Justice of the Peace) say in Spencer-ville, not three years ago, "It must be confessed that the church to-day is not moral society." Dear child of God, do you believe that God's people, whom he has predestinated

in Christ Jesus unto good works, are not moral? Have you no evidence that God's word is true? Are not the glorious works of grace great in your behalf? And while the evidences of your own weakness and the power of temptations have been great, has not the Lord graciously led you to renounce the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and enabled you to overcome in the evil day?

"Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men that turn from the truth." While the further evidences of faith might be enlarged upon, in their relation to the order of the church, as well as to the doctrines that have preceded, yet a few remarks will suffice for the limits of this subject. Paul doubtless met with more than all the oppositions of this day, and was amply qualified to give instruction in all matters of faith and practice. Hence he knew the need of sharp rebukes. For while there were some who would love him all the better for his faithfulness, it was equally necessary, in order to prove who had the love of God in their hearts, and who had not; for while the one would accept and profit by it, the other would show their lack of love to God by rejecting his word and despising his minister. Hence Paul told the Corinthians, "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."—1 Cor. xi. 19. This is for the sifting of the saints, and for the purifying of their worship. Hence John says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

"Unto the pure all things are pure." He doubtless refers to the fact that every man looks upon the facts of nature or grace either with acceptance or distrust, according as his own mind is good or ill. If grace gives lessons of love to God, that soul cannot but feel to profit by each lesson with holy reverence and thanksgiving; while if the soul be sordid, sensual and vile, every solemn thought is turned to low and vulgar account. The pure (what God hath cleansed) will be able to derive benefit from the consideration of every relation of life, either in the world or in the church, and derive some blessing from the most delicate, as well as from the common affairs of nature; not to grant license to wrong, but the harmony of God's righteousness shines through all to them, and enables them to view in worship, even that which the vulgar could only see in wanton jest. Even so the doctrine of God is received or rejected as the character is God-like or Satanic.

"But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure;

but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him; being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

Thus ends the first chapter to Titus, showing to him the character of such as he should ordain to the work of the ministry, and such as he should recognize as the servants of God; as well as a faithful reference to the reprobate, who obey not the truth, neither our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours to serve in humble bonds,  
A. B. BREES.

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## EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., AUGUST 15, 1888.

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## THE UNFRUITFUL FIG TREE.

"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."—Luke xiii. 6-9.

Although this subject has been much discussed by able ministers of the word, as well as much perverted and misapplied by those who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction, at the urgent request of an esteemed sister, we will submit some thoughts upon the text quoted. In this article we do not propose to controvert any views which other brethren may have advanced, nor do we desire to copy what may have been better said by others. Only our views are solicited, and as such they are submitted, claiming alone the consideration due them as tested by the infallible standard of inspired truth.

In the first place it must be remembered that the text is spoken as a parable, and not as a simple record of a literal circumstance. The use of a parable is never to assert any principle, nor to teach any abstract truth; but it is always used as an illustration of the particular truth or doctrine to which it is applied. Hence, it is necessary to consider the circumstances attending the utterance of the parable in every case, lest we should bring ourselves under the condemnation of the declaration of wisdom, "As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools."—Prov. xxvi. 9. The occasion when our Lord spoke this parable will be seen from the preceding context to have been in replying to the report of those who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. In this event the self-reliant Pharisees evidently saw a confirmation of their bitter condemnation of the Galileans. Their contempt of the people of that province appears in their taunting reply to Nicodemus, "Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."—John vii. 52. To the blinded and benighted minds of the proud Pharisees this cruelty of the Roman governor was a divine indorsement of their own decision of the vileness of those who thus miserably perished. After forcibly rejecting this erroneous judgment of the carnal Jews, our Lord spoke this

parable, which seems to be applied primarily as a refutation of the claim on which those Jews were resting. Instead of recognizing in the circumstance as it was told him, what appeared to the Jews, Jesus saw in it the beginning of that cup of wrath which was ready to be poured out upon that rebellious nation whose sins against the covenant which God gave to them were soon to be visited upon them. This is evident from the language immediately preceding the parable. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." This repentance was not simply a reformation of their outward conduct, but it was the same repentance which was preached by John in the wilderness of Judea. That is, it was a turning away from the dead works of the law of Moses, and a reception by living faith of the Word of life as revealed in the gospel of Christ. Under the legal dispensation those who were led by the Spirit of Christ saw in all those types and ceremonies the testimony of Jesus; and thus they were justified by that faith which was expressed in obedience to the law enjoined upon them; but with the coming of the Lord all those ceremonies were fulfilled, and now the antitypical kingdom of God was preached, and all who had the faith of the Son of God were called out of that carnal house of Israel. The repentance required was a turning from the types and ceremonies of the old covenant to the reality of the living gospel of Christ as revealed in the open light of the presence of the Redeemer himself. With the coming of Shiloh that legal economy waxed old and was ready to pass away. So our Lord declared that "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."—Luke xvi. 16. Not only does Jesus refute the false judgment of the Jews by this parable, but he further shows the approaching dissolution of that legal covenant, which was to pass away in its fulfillment by his perfect obedience. This was completely accomplished when he gave his life as the ransom of his chosen people from their sins. Then he truly said, "It is finished." If there had remained one sin of those for whom he died yet resting upon them, then divine justice would have required satisfaction for that sin, and the whole work of redemption would have been a failure. Then Joseph's new tomb would never have released the sacred body of our Lord. Indeed, the whole dominion of our God would have been overthrown; for the will of God would not have been done. But in the resurrection of our Redeemer from the dead is written the receipt in full by which the eternal God acknowledges the complete justification of all for whom he died.

In applying this parable to that legal dispensation our Lord used

the same illustration which was used by inspired prophets in reproving the people of Israel for their departure from the commandments of their law. The favored nation of Israel was often represented as the vineyard of the Lord; and from the earliest records of inspired revelation the fig tree is the symbol of that righteousness which stands in the works of man. It was to the leaves of this tree that our first parents resorted for a covering with which to hide their nakedness, when they had transgressed the commandment of their Creator. The utter failure of their efforts well expresses the hopelessness of creature works for justification in the sight of God. In this application of the parable the legal covenant is represented by the fig tree which was planted in the vineyard of that chosen nation of Israel. As given by the hand of their God the law was holy, and the commandment holy, just and good; but it could only serve to show the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and could never bring forth fruit unto life in that it was weak through the flesh. There was no fault in the law itself; but the weakness which resulted in showing its unprofitableness was found in the fact that there was no power in the sinful nation to whom it was given, by which they could fulfill its holy requirements. In this impossibility of satisfying its demands consisted its dreadful terror. It was indeed "the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones;" and yet it was glorious. The three years mentioned in the parable may refer to the separate periods specified in Matthew i. 17, from Abraham to David, from David to the carrying away into Babylon, and from that event to the coming of Christ. Certainly in none of those years was there found any fruit of obedience to that law, by which the comers thereunto were made perfect. Now the ax was laid at the root of the trees of that whole legal dispensation, and the commandment went forth from the owner of the vineyard, requiring the removal of everything pertaining to that unprofitable dispensation. The plea of the dresser of the vineyard may be expressive of the long forbearance of God in preserving that national organization through all their generations, notwithstanding their failure to keep the statutes which were given them. It is not said that the command to cut down the unfruitful fig tree was revoked at the request of the dresser of the vineyard. The decree was executed in the removal of the covenant by which the nation of Israel had been the favored people of God, and in the close of this chapter the Lord declares that desolation has come upon that natural house. The Sinai covenant was the life of that typical dispensation, and when by their transgression of its conditions the nation of Israel had forfeited the temporal blessings of that covenant,

the long forbearance of God was manifested in their preservation until the time of the coming of the Messiah. This was recognized by the faith of Christ in the prophet when he was moved to declare, "Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there."—Isa. lxxv. 8, 9. To the natural mind it seemed that the Lord did not visit upon that sinful people the just condemnation which was due to their violation of his law; but the Spirit reveals to the faith of the saints the truth that "All his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."—Deut. xxxii. 4. Natural reason can judge only natural things. Time is inseparable from all the thoughts of man. But God is eternal; and his attributes are independent of time. With him there is no succession of events as years pass by. "His ways are everlasting." With us creatures of time there is both past and future; but with God Moses says, "A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."—Psa. xc. 4. Thus the saints can say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not."—Lam. iii. 22. Without remembering the eternal immutability of our God we can never see his justice in the administration of his temporal government, much less can we rest in the assurance of his salvation in delivering us from the guilt of our sins. It is therefore of vital importance to the comfort of the saints that they should understand the truth that their hope rests not upon merit of their own, but upon the unchanging love of God in Christ Jesus.

Many of the afflicted and poor people of God have been sorely perplexed by the suggestions of the accuser, who is ever ready to wrest this parable from its legitimate application, and use it as a warning that they must bring forth fruits of righteousness from their own works by which to find acceptance in the sight of God. To those who do not love righteousness this suggestion brings no trouble, but to them who have the love of holiness within them it is a sore trial. They mourn continually because of their conscious lack of conformity to the perfect pattern of that holiness which they have seen in Jesus; therefore, they feel that if their continuance in the favor of God depends upon any fruit which they can produce they must sink in despair. This misconception of the meaning of this parable may have troubled our sister when she applied for our views of the text. In refutation of that ap-

plication of these words of our Lord it is only necessary to observe that it would contradict his own express declaration that "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Matt. ix. 12, 13. The whole record of inspired Scripture testified to the same glorious doctrine of the salvation of lost sinners by the sovereign grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. No interpretation of any portion of Scripture can be correct if it does not agree with this essential truth. There can be no conditions to be fulfilled by the recipients of that grace which brings salvation to the lost. This is conclusively established in the demonstration given by Paul in Romans xi. 5, 6. The works of man cannot be interwoven with the grace of God in securing the salvation of sinners. Neither is it possible to find in the Scriptures any intimation that there is salvation provided by grace for any others except sinners. They whom Jesus redeemed "were by nature the children of wrath even as others."—Eph. ii. 3. Since there was no condition in the election of the subjects of divine grace, it is inconsistent to suppose that infinite wisdom might be defeated in that election by any subsequent condition. It should also be observed that if the salvation of his people from their sins could depend upon any works of their own, then the redemption which is in Christ does not secure their final rest with him in glory. And if any are saved they will have to render thanks to the condition which secured to them the benefit of that work of Jesus which would not have benefited them but for their compliance with that condition. However such doctrine may flatter the pride of self, those who love the Lord Jesus can never be satisfied with any theory which thus transfers the glory from him to the works which their own hands have wrought. Neither can those who have felt the exceeding sinfulness of sin afford to trust in any such salvation as their own obedience can promise. Both the wisdom and love of God are manifested in the exclusion of all conditional requirements from the system of redeeming grace. The least condition depending upon them for its fulfillment would destroy the comfort of every subject of redemption, for every one would at once realize the impossibility of fulfilling that condition. The conscious sinner must be assured of complete salvation in Christ without merit on his own part, or he has no hope. It is not enough that he should be cleansed from sins which are passed; unless the power of God is engaged to keep him all his earthly sojourn he knows that he cannot stand. All this is secured in the immutable will of God. Jesus came

to do the will of the Father, and to finish the work. That will is that of all which he gave to Jesus he should lose nothing. That will cannot fail of accomplishment while almighty power is able to execute it. Indeed, it is already fulfilled in the victory of our Lord Jesus, "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification."—Rom. iv. 25.

It is worthy of the special consideration of all the followers of Jesus that they can never be taught by the Spirit of truth anything which denies the completion of the work of salvation by our divine Redeemer. He did not fail in any point to secure the redemption for time and for eternity of all for whom he gave himself a sacrifice. No fruit of their own willing or doing can possibly have any part in that redemption. They are required only to work out those works of obedience to their Redeemer which God works in them both to will and to do. In rendering this obedience they glorify their Father which is in heaven. The glory of that heaven shines in the answer of a good conscience toward God in every act of obedience to the law of Christ in their whole pilgrimage through this temporal state. In taking the yoke of Jesus, and in learning of him, they never fail to find rest to their soul, which rest is all they are capable of receiving of heaven while they remain in the body of this death. His rod is visited upon them in disobedience; but even that is an evidence that the Lord loves them; and therefore David sings of the comfort of the rod as well as of the supporting staff of the Lord whom he claims as his Shepherd.—Psa. xxiii. Whatever may be taught in the parable, it certainly is not intended to intimate that the saints of our God are in danger of being finally lost in consequence of a failure upon their part to bring forth fruit acceptable to God from their own works.

#### BASIS OF UNION.

IN compliance with the request of Elder Bartley, we copy the following introductory note and proposition. It is not our desire to influence the minds of brethren in their action in the matter; but candor compels us to say that the proposed "Basis" seems to us more likely to result in additional discord than to promote the peaceful end designed. We are not informed how extensively the proposition has been circulated; but we sincerely trust that no hasty action will be taken. The principles involved are of vital importance to the visible organization of the church; and nothing should be done inconsiderately in so serious a matter.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I hand you a printed circular, as a basis of union among the churches of the saints, who may have been alienated or separated, but now desire to walk in the faith and

order and fellowship of the gospel, and to dwell together in unity. You may please copy the circular in the SIGNS, for the consideration of the brethren and churches. My mind was seriously and prayerfully impressed to write it, and submit it to the churches of the saints for their adoption, if the mind of Christ so leads them. I trust it will commend itself to every one's conscience, as according to the gospel of Christ.

Yours in the love of Christ,  
D. BARTLEY.  
NEW CASTLE, Ind., July 17, 1888.

*To all the churches of the saints, Greeting. Beloved brethren in Christ:*

In order to establish harmony, and promote unity and fellowship among the Primitive Baptist Churches, we, the church of Christ called....., located in the county of....., and State of....., do adopt the following statement, as a basis of brotherly reconciliation, christian love, and gospel fellowship, with the desire and request "that there be no division among us; but that we be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."

1. We believe that God has an elect people among all nations of men, whom he foreknew in his everlasting covenant of love, and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; for whose sins Christ died in the flesh, and was raised from the dead for their justification; in whom they have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; and they shall be saved from sin, death and the grave by his righteous life.

2. We believe that all this new covenant people were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, and were dead in sins; but the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, having raised him from the dead, shall also regenerate, renew sanctify, and finally resurrect unto life, holiness and immortality all for whom he died. He said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth."

3. We believe that when sinners of the family of Adam are quickened by the operation of the Spirit, then the gospel comes to them, not "In word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," and makes known to them their election of God; but to the unquickened the gospel comes in word only. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," said Paul.

4. We believe that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come;" and that the gospel of Christ "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" but to them that perish it is foolishness, as says Paul.

5. We believe that penitent believers in Christ are the only subjects for baptism and membership in the gospel church; that the gospel ministry, baptism and the Lord's supper belong to the visible gospel kingdom; and therefore we will not recognize immersion by any of the Arminian orders as gospel baptism.

6. To all the churches of the saints in Christ, "who have obtained like precious faith with us," as briefly stated in the above five items, we open the door of gospel fellowship, desiring reconciliation with them in the gospel; and for Christ's sake we meekly ask and extend forgiveness for everything which has hindered fellowship between any of them and us heretofore. We do also hereby rescind all such hindering acts and records, if any have been adopted by this church in the past. And may the Spirit and love of Christ constrain all the sister churches to concur with us by adopting this statement, that our fellowship may abound in

Christ, and that we "all may be one," as he prayed the Father.

Adopted in our regular conference meeting, Saturday, the.....day of....., 188...., and ordered officially signed on behalf of the church, and filed in our church book; and that our Clerk give a brief notice thereof in any of the Primitive Baptist papers.

....., Moderator.  
....., Clerk.

While it is true that since the days of the apostles, divisions and dissensions have been more or less prevalent among the churches of the saints, it is also true that the inspired word informs us why this is included in the appointment of God. "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."—1 Cor. xi. 19. To finite reason it seemed very deplorable that even the apostles had sharp contention, and on at least one occasion Paul withstood Peter to the face, "because he was to be blamed." In the church at Corinth schisms and divisions were reprov'd; but there is no record of any attempt at conciliation by devising an expression of doctrine in which the offense of the cross might be so modified that the various parties might harmonize. The societies and organizations of men, in which no principle is involved, may compromise their differences upon the ground of mutual concession; but in the church of Christ there can be no deviation from the "one faith" "which was once delivered unto the saints." That faith includes all the order and discipline of the church of Christ, as well as all sound doctrine. As the Spirit of Christ recognizes no authority even in the church itself by which the truth may be modified, it is manifest that there is no ground of agreement which can be accepted by those who would follow our Lord, aside from the fullness of the inspired standard, as revealed in the law of Christ. All consistent believers in Jesus confess that this is true; and doubtless this truth is dear to our brother Bartley as to all other followers of the precious Redeemer. Neither the favor of the professedly religious world nor the preservation of their own natural lives could compensate the saint for the loss of the sanction of the inspired word of truth. Therefore, it is essentially needful that they be very careful to commit themselves to no declaration of faith which is not fully sustained by the Scriptures. It may be that so far as certain articles go they are consistent with truth; yet they may be defective in failing to express essential truth which is revealed in the inspired standard. Neither the declarations of churches nor councils can change the abstract truth of God. A very serious disturbance of the peace and comfort of the church may result, however, from attempting to modify the test which God has given to his church.

Without designing to influence the judgment of the churches to whom

this professed confession of faith may be submitted, we would call attention to the very serious importance of taking the action proposed. If the adoption of this basis of union is a departure from the position heretofore occupied by all the churches in our correspondence, it will necessarily interrupt the peaceful relations between those adopting the new standard and others with whom they are now in fellowship, who may not be ready to accept the change. This would be very far from promoting the end contemplated by the writer of the new declaration of principles. If on the other hand there is no change of principles involved in adopting the resolutions, then it does not appear how any union could be effected under them which would not be as well effected upon the basis of the inspired standard defined in the articles of faith already agreed upon by all the churches now in our correspondence. The substitution of a new declaration of principles in the place of those now held by the churches would of itself tend to confuse the minds of those now in harmony; and even though really involving no sacrifice of doctrine or order, they should be seriously considered before being accepted by any church desiring to remain in the fellowship of those who have held the old principles as correct and scriptural. It is not claimed that any uninspired articles of faith are infallibly expressed, even though they be held as consistent with the revelation which God has given of his truth. Yet it is not advisable to change accepted forms of expressing truth, unless it be to adopt language more accurately conformed to the inspired language of Scripture. If the proposed change embodies this desirable feature it may well be considered; but if there is still the liability to error in the proposed basis which characterizes other efforts of uninspired writers, then it may well be doubted whether anything will be gained by the breaking up of the old basis of union upon which the churches have stood in time past.

Regarding the proposed action as of very serious importance, we cannot conscientiously refrain from calling attention to some facts involved in the adoption of the proposition of brother Bartley. The first and most important consideration is the fact that in adopting this declaration of principles we are required to rescind all acts and records which in the past have been adopted, if they hinder fellowship between us and any who will accept this "basis of brotherly reconciliation, christian love and gospel fellowship." It is hardly credible that our brother really means all that is expressed in this broad proposition. Literally construed, it would restore every one who has ever been excluded from the fellowship of the church, whether for heresy or gross immorality, without any other action on

their part but their professed acceptance of the items contained in this circular. It would not only rescind the declaration of non-fellowship for the modern religious inventions which are advocated by the popular order of Baptists commonly called New School, but it would admit all who practice immersion for baptism, unless they might confess that they are "Arminians," and so are excluded from the general religious amnesty by the latter clause of the fifth item. Even there the precise line of division might not be easily discerned, since there might be difficulty in determining what is meant by the term "Arminian orders." We suppose that it is not designed to recognize "as gospel baptism" any other mode but immersion; but there is nothing in these "five items" which would forbid the claim of those who profess to be satisfied with sprinkling or pouring for baptism. The only limitation given is that "We will not recognize *immersion* by any of the Arminian orders as gospel baptism." This may seem to be a captious objection, as it is doubtless intended to require that all who are received shall be those who have been immersed according to the form authorized by the example of our Lord and his inspired apostles. We do not for a moment suppose that brother Bartley would recognize as baptism anything but immersion. There is nothing in these specifications requiring that the immersion designated shall have been in the fellowship of any church, so long as it was not "administered by any of the Arminian orders." If immersed by Mormons, by the Greek church, or any who are not called Arminian orders, under this creed it must be received as gospel baptism. We repeat that we have no idea that brother Bartley designs to include such as have been immersed by those who are not recognized as followers of Christ, among the number with whom it is proposed to walk in fellowship. Yet there is nothing in these items to limit the fraternity to such as are even prepared by grace to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

The adoption of this as a basis of union would be the rejection of all former restrictions. While we might have the understanding that only subjects of grace should be included in our union, others might be ready to claim that the mere acceptance of these terms of union, in the letter of them, should entitle them to a place in our fellowship. This would lead to the expulsion of all conscientious believers in the truth from such an organization. Could a society united upon such a creed be justly recognized as the church of our Lord Jesus Christ? During the nineteen centuries which have nearly elapsed since the organization of the church of Christ at Jerusalem no better basis of union has been found necessary than the inspired

rule given in the New Testament by apostolic authority. Upon this basis we have held that the Old School or Primitive Baptist church has stood. Is it either needful or advisable now to adopt a new basis as more suited to secure harmony than that which has the sanction of the Prince of peace himself? Are we safe in laying aside the declaration of faith under which we have been united hitherto for the sake of securing the favor of those who have never in former times received the truth which is dear to us? In so doing can we be followers of him who "is despised and rejected of men?" Are we certain that the proposed articles of faith are clearer and less liable to misconstruction than the Scriptures, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction?

It is far from our design to be captious or unnecessarily critical in examining the proposed items of agreement; but in so important a matter it is needful that every expression be examined not merely in the light of love and sincerity, but also in its liability to be misconstrued by opposers of the truth. Hence, it is with no intention of being unkind that we refer to some particular expressions in the circular, in which we see room for different construction. We do not object to anything in the first five items as they are numbered, if we are allowed to put our own construction upon them; but they may be so construed as to be not only at variance with what is held by all lovers of sound doctrine, but even to contradict plain declarations of Scripture and clearly known facts. By the last clause of the first item we understand the writer to assert the certainty of the final salvation of all the saints: and this is undeniable truth. But it may be construed to assert that they are saved from natural death in the sense that the Jews misconstrued the words of Jesus as recorded.—John viii. 51-53. Even Jesus himself lay in the grave, and all his followers must leave this mortal state after they have suffered awhile here. In that sense therefore they are not saved from the grave, though they receive the victory over death through the manifestation of Christ in them as their eternal life.

To the second item we do not object in the sense in which we doubt not that the writer meant it to be understood; but literally construed it would deny that any of the saints in past ages have yet been regenerated, renewed or sanctified. Jude says that those to whom he wrote were "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." This was already done when he wrote; and in that sense it certainly cannot be correctly spoken of as something yet to take place in the future. In its manifestation experimentally in each individual saint it is progressively developed in time. In this sense the declaration is in-

consistent with the Scriptures and with the experience of the saints.

In the third item we are not quite sure that we understand just what is meant. It is by no means certain that the gospel always comes to the saints "in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance." That it comes even in word to the unquickened is not declared in the Scriptures. We are sure that our brother does not mean to indorse the doctrine which is liable to be deduced from this expression, that the gospel "offers salvation to every sinner on the condition of its acceptance by him." This might be understood from the language here used. It is not said in the Scriptures that Christ crucified comes even in word to the unquickened who cannot hear his word. Jesus says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."—John vi. 63. In the absence of his words there is no gospel; and where his words come they are the power of God unto salvation, and that power is irresistible. When Jesus speaks to the unquickened sinner his word is life, as when he called the dead Lazarus from the tomb. The proclamation of that word by his servants is indeed to them that perish foolishness; but the proclamation of it is not the word of God which is proclaimed. Even the saints may hear the proclamation of the gospel in word at times when it is in word only. They may feel that it is truth; yet it is only the letter of it which comes to them. While they may know that it is truth; they cannot feed upon it. At another time they may hear Jesus speak in his gospel, and it comes to them in all the power of divine life.

The fourth item must not be construed to deny the declarations of Paul, "Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."—Rom. x. 18. And "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard; and *which was preached to every creature which is under heaven.*"—Col. i. 23. No testimony of carnal reason can be received in denial of this express assertion by inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The discrimination involved in the fifth item rejecting "immersion by any of the Arminian order" requires to be supplemented by a test which shall clearly define the orders which are so designated. This cannot be determined by the creeds which those orders profess to hold, as many of the orders profess in their articles doctrine which they neither believe nor preach. If they are to decide the matter they will not claim to be Arminians. If it is still left for the churches to decide there is as wide a gulf between the church and all others as before the adoption of the new declaration. Thus a new schism is originated, instead of any union.

In the unlimited expression of the sixth item every word of the doctrine of Christ might be included in that which is rescinded as something "which has hindered fellowship between any of them and us heretofore." When anything erroneous has been held by the church in the past, we should never cling to that error. But in forsaking that one point it is not necessary to discard clearly revealed truth. It is certainly right to depart from any position which is contrary to sound doctrine; but in every case the sentiment discarded should be distinctly stated, and the authority for its rejection plainly given. The comprehensive language of this sixth item may be construed to rescind even the record of our faith in the doctrine of salvation from sin by the grace of God through the blood of Jesus Christ. All that is specified is that it "has hindered fellowship between any of them" who are willing to accept this ground of union "and us heretofore." This opens the way for the reception of all who have been excluded from the church either for gross immorality or any heresy. It goes further and asks to be forgiven for the obedience to the law of Christ by which such transgressors have been cut off from the fellowship of the church. Those who regard the authority of the Lord Jesus as their rule should consider well before taking such a course as would thus annul all their past obedience to his law.

In calling attention to these as some of the objections which occur to us as being in the way of adopting the proposed "basis of union among the churches of the saints," we do not charge any improper design on the part of brother Bartley. As a lover of the order of the church of Christ he doubtless feels as deep a desire to maintain the true line of separation between the church and all false orders as is felt by any other minister of the gospel. The proposition may have found favor with some dear brethren to whom it has been submitted. With no purpose of censuring any one, we have simply presented these suggestions by way of showing what advantage designing enemies of truth might take of such action as is here proposed in the substitution of this "basis" in the place of the position which the church has heretofore occupied as separate and distinct from all who have departed from the doctrine which we have learned in the Scriptures and in our individual experience. May all the churches of the saints in every place be guided in this matter by the unerring Spirit of truth, so that they may walk in the right way of the Lord, and may it please the God of peace to unite all his people in that peace which is not dependent upon finite minds, being the fruit of the Spirit. Then will discord and strife be banished from the visible organization of his church, and the glory will

be manifestly to himself. Any peace which does not come from God will prove a snare to his saints; and "When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only; that the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared."—Job xxxiv. 29, 30.

#### PRICE REDUCED.

BROTHER J. B. Hardy, of Wellsford, Kiowa Co., Kan., has authorized us to publish a reduction in the price of the "Five Days Debate." For reduced prices and full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### "THE EDITORIALS." FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### APPOINTMENTS.

LIGONIER, Ind., July 14, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I send you a list of appointments for Elder Caudell, a continuation of the previous ones I sent. Tippecanoe, Marshall Co., Ind., August 20th and 21st; New Hope, 22d and 23d; Island, 24th; Bethlehem, 25th and 26th; Albion, 27th; Shilo, 28th and 29th; Wabash, 30th; Mississinewa Association, Friday, Saturday and Sunday; Taylor's Creek, September 4th; Harmony, 5th. After which brother Goble is expected to arrange for him until his return home.

Very truly yours,

A. H. SMITH.

ELDER Benton Jenkins will, providence permitting, preach at the house of sister Payne, No. 56 North Fifth street, near Temple, Paterson, N. J., on August 20, 1888, at two o'clock p. m.

#### MARRIAGES.

ON July 25th, 1888, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at his residence, Mr. William G. Castle and Miss Florence S. St. John, both of Middletown, N. Y.

#### OBITUARY NOTICES.

It seems that it has fallen my lot to write something in memory of our much beloved sister in Christ, **Sarah A. Arrington**, who departed this life June 3d, 1888.

She was born in Upson Co., Ga., Nov. 27th, 1833, and moved when a child with her parents, Henry and Sallie Barron, to Alabama, where they resided several years. Their next move brought her to this state (Louisiana), in the year 1852. During her move from Alabama to Louisiana she met her first husband, F. M. Hawkins, and married him April 25th, 1852; but their union was broken by the death of the husband, December 14th, 1864. She was married again to Dr. J. V. Arrington, who preceded her to the grave about two months. She had no children from either union.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at New Hope, Union Parish, Louisiana, August 13th, 1870, and remained a faithful member until her death. She was much devoted to the cause of her heavenly Master, though the temptations of Satan, the depravity of her nature, and the allurements of this world, were too strong for her to manage when God was not with her. Her walk was such as manifested the dying of the Lord Jesus in her body from day to day. The Lord

blessed her with sufficient grace for her to adorn the profession she had made with unshaken confidence of all who knew her. She believed that Christ was the Lord of heaven and earth, and therefore disbelieved in any of the institutions of men as being auxiliary to the people or church of God. She was fully tried on this point a short time previous to her death, which manifested that she cared more for her Savior and the profession she had made than for all the smiles of an ungodly world.

She was taken with what the doctors pronounced dropsy about the first of September, 1887, but was not confined to her bed until about the first of May, 1888. The death of her husband, with a more violent attack of the same disease, overwhelmed her so much that she was soon in a hopeless condition. Aid of physicians was obtained to ease her severe pain at times, but that was all they could do. The voice of death had been spoken, and none could make it of none effect. She expressed a willingness to leave this evil world, and often said to those around her that she longed for the hour of death to arrive, so that she would be free from her misery. During her illness she suffered a great deal, but she seemed to bear it with as much patience and fortitude as any one could. She quietly passed away at the time mentioned above, at the residence of her brother, Mr. J. D. Barron, when, it is hoped, her spirit was carried to that blissful shore where sin and sorrow are felt and feared no more. She was fifty-five years, six months and six days old. She leaves four sisters, two brothers, together with a number of more distant relatives and friends, and the church, to lament for her.

N. B. BIRD, JR.

SPEARVILLE, La., July 5, 1888.

DIED—June 2d, 1888, at her home in Bloom Township, Seneca County, Ohio, **Elizabeth Anna Dove**, aged seventy years, two months and nineteen days. She was buried June 5th, 1888. A funeral sermon was preached the same day to a large congregation, by Elder L. B. Sherwood.

The subject of the above notice was born in Shenandoah Co., Va., March 13th, 1818, and was married to Job Dove in the year 1842, with whom she lived until his death, which occurred January 21st, 1881. There were born to them eight children (three boys and five girls), all of whom are now living, the youngest being past twenty-seven years old. Upon the relation of her hope in Christ, she was received into the fellowship of the Honey Creek Church of Old School Baptists, August 8th, 1857, and was baptized the next day by Elder Lewis Seitz. She was a consistent member, and remained in full fellowship with the church until her death. She had very poor health for fifteen years, being afflicted with heart and kidney disease. She bore all her suffering with christian patience, and in the last few days of her life suffered great agony; yet she did not murmur, but told us that Christ was with her, and that she would not have to suffer one pain too much. She called upon her dear Redeemer to come and take her home to himself, time and again. Two days before she died she called her children to her bed-side and bid them farewell, telling them to tell the writer farewell for her, he being the only one of her children that was not present. O how hard it is to lose such a mother as she was. She was always kind to us, and did all in her power to the very last for our comfort, leaving us, above all to be prized, abundant evidence of her acceptance with God; so that while we mourn the loss of a dear mother, our hope and confidence in God is strengthened, for we are again assured that he will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in him. O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? May God remember us in

mercy who mourn the loss of our dear mother, and pardon all our sins, and qualify us to follow the example of our parents who have gone before, who, we truly and confidently believe, have entered into that rest that remains to the people of God.

A. F. DOVE.

**Elder John McDonald** was born August 7th, 1807, in Miami Co., Ohio, and died in Mercer Co., Ohio, near Celina, the county seat, July 14th, 1888, where he had resided for many years, following the double occupation of farming and preaching the gospel of Christ.

He was married to Mariah Baker, June 30th, 1824, and his dear old companion still survives him. He was ordained to the ministry in the year 1829, making him fifty-nine years in the ministry. He was an Old School or Primitive Baptist in the full sense of the term, making no compromise with error, no matter where found. He was an able defender of the faith, and salvation by grace was his joy and theme. The good Lord has removed him from time to eternity. He has gone from us and time forever, and O how I and the little church in his neighborhood will miss his fatherly advice and counsel; but we mourn not as those who have no hope. We are assured that it is the Lord's will; and thus it must be, that when we have numbered our days we must go hence. May the God of love and mercy regard those that are left behind, and especially his dear old companion, who stood by him so patiently through so many storms of sorrow and care in this life, and so nobly filled her place in his last suffering, which was long and severe. More than two months he was confined to his bed. The writer of this has been intimately acquainted with Elder McDonald for the past fifteen years.

W. O. WILKIN.

My dear younger brother, **Johnson L. Bartley**, peacefully fell asleep in Jesus at 10 p. m., July 7, 1888, at his home near Willow Hill, Jasper Co., Illinois, in his sixtieth year.

His disease was consumption. I visited him early last month, and preached at his house, by his request. His confidence and trust in the Lord Jesus were full of assurance and peace, and he was raised above all doubts and fears. He was not only reconciled, but even cheerful, while arranging his affairs for his departure and counseling his young sons. About thirty years ago he and my older brother, Amos, were baptized by dear old Elder Simon Billings, in the faith, hope and love of Christ. He was a humble, orderly, worthy Primitive Baptist. His end was peace. His wife, Elizabeth, died in the faith of Jesus three or four years ago. He left one daughter and five sons, one sister and five brothers, many relatives, friends and neighbors, the church and brethren, to sorrow; yet not for him, but for themselves. His funeral was very largely attended at Brockville on Sunday, the 8th instant, at which Elder Lanter preached. I was not permitted the sad privilege of being present. May the Lord comfort and save the dear orphaned children, that they may also die in Christ, as did their dear parents.

In sorrow and hope,

D. BARTLEY.

NEW CASTLE, Ind., July 17, 1888.

DIED—At his residence in Gilboa, May 25th, 1888, **Daniel Hay**.

He had been in poor health for a number of years, and for a year or so was quite feeble. He was born December 8th, 1814, and was married to Samantha Youmans September 22d, 1836. He was a quiet, peaceable man, and labored to care for his family; and while he was laboring with his hands for the support of his family, his mind was feasting on the precious things of the kingdom. I have

Known brother Hay about twenty-five years quite intimately, and felt that he was alive to the cause of his God ere he was able to take the yoke of Christ by professing him before many witnesses; but he was made willing, and related his exercises to the church, and was baptized December 13th, 1885, by Elder D. Earl. He was a faithful brother, always contending that salvation is all of grace, and that poor, lost sinners are saved. He filled his place in the house of God whenever health and circumstances would permit, and spoke of his hope in Christ with much feeling, to the comfort of his brethren. He was afflicted about a week before his departure with paralysis, and passed gently away. He leaves his wife, three children and grandchildren to mourn. He has left his house of clay, to dwell in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Elder D. Earl preached on the occasion from First Corinthians xv. 51; and after services his body was buried in the cemetery at Manorkill.

No more by sin and sorrow pained;  
But free from sin, he lives again.

D. S. ELLIOT.

MANORKILL, N. Y.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Licking Association will, providence permitting, hold her annual session with the church at Georgetown, Ky., on the Cincinnati Southern R. R., twelve miles north of Lexington, commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1888, and continuing three days. All lovers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, as well as the order of his house, are cordially invited to come and join with us in songs of praise to the Lord God, whom we wish to adore.

J. W. ROYSTER, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord will, with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday (19th and 20th) in September, 1888.

A cordial invitation is given to ministers and brethren of our faith and order to attend. Those coming on the Ulster and Delaware R. R. from Kingston will take the afternoon train on Tuesday to Halcottsville, and stop at that place, where there will be teams to take them to places of entertainment and to the meeting.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

If it is the Lord's will, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, commencing on Friday, September 7th, 1888, and continuing three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Richmond Station, on the Maine Central R. R., on the Accommodation train on Thursday afternoon, September 6th.

The friends of Elder J. N. Badger would like to see him once more in Maine, as it has been a long time since he visited us.

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

THE Spoon River Association is to meet with New Hope Church, on Friday before the first Sunday in September (August 31st), and continue three days.

Greenbush is the place of meeting. St. Augustine and Avon, on the C., B. & Q., and Roseville, on their R. I. Division, are stations to stop at, and also Berwick, on the Iowa Central.

I. N. VANMETER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held this year with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, August 31st, 1888, and continuing three days. All that have a mind to come and

meet with us at that time are invited to do so, for we shall be glad to see you. There will be teams at North Berwick depot on Thursday, the day before the meeting, to take all that come to the place of meeting. We now expect Elders Purington and Chick to be with us through the meeting.

WM. QUINT.

THE Des Moines River Association is to convene with Greens Grove Church, three miles northwest of Marion and four miles north of Cedar Rapids, Linn Co., Iowa, at the residence of W. S. Gott, on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1888, and Monday following.

Those coming on the Burlington, Cedar Rapids & St. Paul R. R. will be met at Cedar Rapids. Those coming on the Chicago & Northwestern R. R. will be met at the same place. Those coming on the Chicago, Milwaukee & Council Bluffs R. R. will be met at Marion. Those coming on the Illinois Central R. R. will be met at Robin, two and one-half miles from the place of meeting. We wish all lovers of truth to visit our association.

W. S. GOTT.

THE Virginia Corresponding Meeting will, the Lord willing, convene with the New Valley Church, on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1888, continuing three days.

Trains on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. will be met at Point of Rocks, Maryland, on Tuesday. Trains on the Washington & Ohio R. R. will be met at Leesburg, Virginia, on Tuesday. Trains leave Washington City at 9:00 a. m. and 4:45 p. m. Alexandria at 9:07 a. m. and 4:50 p. m. We would respectfully request all to come on the morning trains. We invite our brethren, sisters and friends to attend our meeting.

E. V. WHITE.

THE Salem Association of Regular Baptists will meet with the Middle Creek Church, five miles southeast of Carthage, Hancock Co., Ill., on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1888, and continue three days. Those that come by rail will be met at Carthage, on the C., B. & Q. R. R., and also Wabash R. R.; also at Bently, on the Wabash R. R. There will be conveyances at each place. A cordial invitation is given to brethren and sisters to meet with us. Those that come will inquire of their railroad agent about the time of trains.

C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

INFORMATION is hereby given to all who may wish to attend the Highland Association of the Regular Predestinarian Baptists, that by an arrangement, a change has been made in the place of holding the same. Therefore the said association will be held with the Salem Church, Mooney's School-House, four and one-half miles west of Sebree, Webster Co., Ky., commencing on Friday before the third Sunday in August, 1888.

Those coming by railroad will be met on Thursday evening and Friday morning at Sebree with teams to convey them to the place of meeting. All Old School Baptists are cordially invited to attend.

F. H. BARKER.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Caesar's Creek Church, Greene County, Ohio, on Friday before the third Sunday in September (14th), 1888, and continue the two following days.

Brethren and friends coming by rail from the south, west and north will come to Xenia, Ohio, and there change cars and take the Dayton, Fort Wayne & Chicago R. R. for Jamestown. Those coming from Washington C. H. will come on the same road to Jamestown, where they will be met by the brethren and con-

veyed to places of entertainment and to the meeting. Trains arrive at Jamestown at 9:53 a. m. and 5:25 p. m. from Xenia. Those coming in their own conveyance will call on brethren John and Jeremiah Stevens, near where the meeting will be held. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and a special invitation to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order. Come on Thursday before the meeting.

ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE Concord Association of Regular Baptists, by permission of the Lord, will meet with the Otter Creek Church, on Wednesday, September 5th, 1888, at 10 o'clock sharp, and continue three days, at brother Enoch Hall's, five miles northwest of Girard, and five miles southwest of Virdeu, Illinois.

Those coming on the cars will come to Girard, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. Those coming from the south or the southeast should arrive on the evening trains on the 4th, as the north and west bound trains will not be in time on the 5th for the meeting. Evening trains' time at Girard, Chicago, Alton & St. Louis R. R., going north, 7:58. Jacksonville Southeastern, going northwest, 7:57. Those coming from the north and northwest will be met on the morning of the meeting, September 5th. South bound train on the C., A. & St. L. R. R. arrives at Girard daily at 7:42 a. m. Jacksonville Southeastern R. R., going south, 7:40. At said times trains will be met.

In behalf of Otter Creek Church.

S. R. BOGESS, Church Clerk.

THE Western Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with the North Cedar Church, two miles northeast of Attica, Marion Co., Iowa, on Saturday before the second Sunday in September (8th), 1888, and continue in session three days.

Those coming from the east will be met at Knoxville Friday noon. Train from the west at 4:25 p. m. Those coming at other times will inquire for Robert Bacon. Ministering brethren especially invited.

THOMSON BRIDGES.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri will, the Lord willing, meet with the church called Three Forks of Nodaway, at the Union meeting-house, in Page County, Iowa, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Hopkins, ten miles southeast of the place of meeting, on Thursday noon. Also, there will be teams at Morsman, a station four miles west of the place of meeting, on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. OMAS SHEARER.

THE Lebanon Association of Regular Predestinarian or Primitive Baptists will, the Lord willing, convene with the Lebanon Church, Henry Co., Ind., on Friday before the third Saturday in August (17th), 1888, and continue three days, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m.

Those coming from the north, over the Ft. Wayne & Cincinnati Road, will stop at Springfield, and those from the south at Mt. Summit, where they will be met. Those coming from the east and west will come over the O. I. & W. and the Pan Handle to New Castle, and inquire for Peter Coble. Come on all trains on Thursday and on the early trains Friday morning.

PETER COBLE, Clerk.

THE forty-eighth annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, will convene with the Providence Church, Trimble Co., Ky., beginning on Friday

before the first Saturday in September, 1888, and continuing three days.

Those coming east by rail will stop at Turner's Station, and those from the west at Campbellsburgh, on the Louisville & Cincinnati Short Line R. R., where they will be cared for, on Thursday and Friday. A cordial invitation is given to ministering brethren and all lovers of the truth.

E. F. RANSELL, Clerk.

THE Rock Spring Association of Regular Baptists is to be held with Mount Pleasant Church, in Carter Co., Ky., to commence on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888.

Said church is situated about three miles from Olive Hill. All Primitive Baptists are invited to attend who believe in the doctrine of predestination, election, particular atonement and salvation by grace; but we have no fellowship for those who hold the doctrine of general atonement and conditional salvation.

Brethren of the Primitive or Old School order attending our association will get off the train at Olive Hill, and inquire for brethren Adam Wallace or Henry Hicks, and they will be taken care of.

L. A. THORBERRY, Clerk.

THE first session of the Roxbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Batavia Kill, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 5th and 6th, 1888, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m.

All lovers of truth are welcome to participate in the coming meeting, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

Those coming by public conveyance from Rondout or Kingston and way will stop at Roxbury, and from Hobart or Stamford at the same place, where the trains will be met from both ways, both morning and evening, on Tuesday before the meeting.

WM. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Galloway Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Darby Run Church, near Galloway, Franklin Co., Ohio, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, which will be the last day of August, 1888; meeting to commence at 10 o'clock a. m., and last three days.

Brethren and friends coming east will come to Springfield, and take the I. B. & W. R. R. to Galloway. Those coming west will come to Columbus, and take the I. B. & W. R. R. to Galloway, where they will be met by the brethren and friends and taken to the place of meeting.

All Old School Predestinarian Baptists are cordially invited to attend our association and join with us in the solemn worship of the Lord our God.

J. G. FORD, Pastor.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet four miles north of Flannagan, in Livingston Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by the Illinois Central R. R. will change cars at Kankakee Junction, and stop at Falannagan. Those coming by the Santa Fe R. R. will stop at Dana. Those coming from the west will have to change cars at Ancona, and stop at Dana. There will be means of conveyance to each place to take those attending to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is given to brethren and sisters to meet with us.

JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Morgan Association of Regular Baptists will meet, the Lord permitting, with Plum Creek Church, six miles northwest of Winchester, Scott Co., Ill., at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the third Sunday in August, 1888. Brethren from a distance are cordially invited to

meet with us. Those coming from the east or west on the Wabash R. R., will be met with conveyances at Bluff City on Saturday morning, about 8 o'clock, trains arriving. Those from the north or south on the C. B. and Q. R. R., will be met at Winchester on Friday and Saturday at noon.

G. W. MURRAY, Mod.  
GILES REEDER, Clerk.

**YEARLY MEETINGS.**

A YEARLY Meeting is to be held with the Sugar Creek Church, in Putnam Co., Ohio, on the second Sunday and Saturday before in September. We invite all Old School Predestinarian Baptist brethren to visit us, and all ministers that can come. Those coming from the east, north and south will change cars at Columbus Grove and come to Rimer, where they will be cared for; and those coming from the west will come to Delphos, change cars, and come to Rushmore or to Rimer.

C. G. MILLER.

A YEARLY Meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, at 10 o'clock, continuing two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth; especially ministering brethren. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take the train at North Avenue station, M. C. R. R., for Long Green or Forest Hill, on Friday before, at 4 p. m. Those coming from the north will take the train on the same road to Forest Hill. Conveyances will be on hand.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Clerk.

**RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.**

W. E. McClendon 2, Affo Hall 2, W. P. Gass 2 50, S. A. Still 2 50, Harvey Hester 2 50, Cicero J. East 2 50, Elder J. R. Respass 18, James O'Neal 2, Perry A. Young 2 50, George F. Hudson 2.—Total \$33 50.

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**Williamston Academy.**

The Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888, and continues twenty weeks. The Academy is situated in a grove of large oaks, and has a well of excellent water. The location is about a mile from Roanoke River, and ninety feet above its level.

There were seventy pupils, thirty-two male and thirty-eight female, during the past scholastic year. Pupils are carefully prepared for business, or for any class in College. Monthly Examinations and Reports. Discipline mild, but firm.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1888. NO. 17.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

WOODLAND, Cal., June 3, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been thinking for several years that I would write a short sketch of the Lord's dealings with me as I have sojourned through this vale of tears, and how

"He safely led my soul along,  
His loving-kindness O how strong."

I was born in the state of Ohio, in Butler County, March, 1827. My father and mother, William and R. M. Van Sickle, joined the Old School Baptist Elk Creek Church soon after I was born; but that did not make me an Old School Baptist. The apostle says, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Yet not one of my three brothers or two sisters ever joined the church or even professed to believe the doctrine. Not that I am any better than they, for I am not a whit better; and I have often wondered why I was made to hear his voice, any more than they. But when I was very young I had very serious thoughts at times, and would lay down in the cradle and cry, to think that I had to die at some time. I would wonder what would become of me. I dreaded the thought of the grave and of being buried. It was a fearful thought. Thus I went on until I was seven years old, when my grandfather died, and Elder Stephen Girard came to the house and preached his funeral. I shall never forget his text, 1 Peter i. 23-25, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever," &c. After that my fears of death were worse than ever at times, so much so that I dreamed that I saw the world come to an end. I was at home at my father's at the time. I dreamed that they had meeting there, as they frequently had. I thought there was a dreadful storm came up and all at once everything turned black as darkness itself. Then in a moment of time everything upon earth seemed to pass away, and the earth vanished, and I seemed to be lifted up. I could look around, but could see nothing. It was just like looking into darkness. I was so frightened that I awoke, and found

it was a dream. It is more than forty-five years since then, yet I have never forgotten the dream, for it has been indelibly stamped upon my memory. But at that time I did not think much about being a sinner. Our parents were very good and kind to us, and used to take us to meeting often; yet I so much feared to die that it was all my trouble. When I would go with them to meeting, I always thought all the Old Baptists were so good. From some cause I always liked them. I could not say, like some, that I would never be an Old School Baptist, as I really did love them, and wished I could be as good as I thought they were. I tried to be as good as I could, and would think that I was about as good as my brothers and sisters, and other young folks of my acquaintance. I would think I did not do any worse than they did; yet at times I would feel very uneasy, and would wish I could do better than they did, for I was very ambitious, and wanted to excel others. Yet during all this time I did not feel that I was a sinner. When I began to be about fifteen or sixteen years old my uneasiness began to increase, and I began to feel there was something wrong with me. When I would go to meeting, and while under preaching, I would feel restless and uneasy. Then I would think, O I know that I am a sinner. Then again I would think, O I am not quite so bad as some others. I began to think I must do something, but how to begin or what to do I did not know, but thought I would try to be as good as I could. But the first thing I would know, I would be as bad as ever. Sometimes I would go to meeting, when Elder William Thompson would preach, and he would get to telling the travels of the child of God. Sometimes I would turn my face away, for fear he might notice me, and I would wonder if some one had been telling him of me. When I would return home again I would not think much about myself, only at times the thought would come forcibly to me, What would become of me if I should die? I would shudder at the thought, I so much dreaded the thought of being buried. I would think I must pray, but did not know how to pray; yet I could not help saying, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. I thought, "What shall I do, or whither flee, To escape the vengeance due to me?" Then again for a time something

would occur to amuse me, and perhaps I would not think of my sad case for a time. Then again I would go with my parents to meeting to hear Elder Thompson, or Elder J. H. Flint, or Elder Samuel Williams, or some of that kind; and I must say that I always did love to hear them preach, yet I do not think that I always understood them. Indeed I know I did not; for they would get too deep and high into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven for my incomprehensive mind. But I would think if I could only be as good and know as much as they did, then I would be very happy; but so far from God I seemed to be, I thought, Could there be any one like me? But time rolled on, and I got no better, until the spring of 1849. Then, if possible, my trouble began to increase. In March my burden weighed so heavy on my mind that I went to my bed, but could not get on my knees to pray, for it seemed like it would be mockery. I could not say anything but "O Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner." After laying down I could not sleep, but lay there thinking of my awful condition. But all at once Jesus appeared to my view. The sight I never shall forget. He seemed to be hanging on the cross, between the heavens and the earth, and I saw him seemingly as plainly as I ever saw anything with my natural eyes; yet I know it was by an eye of faith. But my surprise was great, and my faith was weak, for it seemed that he did not die for me. I was not worth his notice. And now what must I do? There he was, plain to my view, and I did not so much as ask him to have mercy on me. How ungrateful I was, not to think of it. So I was left in trouble still. At times my troubles were so great I thought I could not bare the thought, but thought I must sink and be lost forever. Then these words came to my mind,

"How can I sink with such a prop  
As my eternal God?  
He holds the earth's huge pillars up,  
And spread the heavens abroad."

This relieved my mind for a time, yet at the time I did not know that I had ever seen the words before. Soon after that I was married, and moved with my husband to Indiana. He not being a professor of any denomination, and Old Baptists scarce, I seldom got to hear a Baptist preach; and the cares of the world and a family had in a measure banished the troubles of my mind for a

time, until the winter of 1853, when I left all my friends and relatives in Indiana and came with my husband to California. Then time and time things, and the change being so great, it seemed like I had forgotten all about myself, and did not even then think of the many dangers seen and unseen. Yet the good Lord had spared my unprofitable life through it all, while

"I had no heart to pray,  
And lifeless was my frame."

But Jesus was still watching over me, although I knew it not.

"He safely led my soul along,  
His loving-kindness O how strong."

On September 20, 1854, I was sick, and began to think, What if I should die? I could not sleep for three days and nights. I felt that if I should fall asleep I never should awake again in this world. They gave me something to make me sleep, and I had a woman to sit by my bed, and told her not to let me sleep long if I fell asleep. On the third day I fell into a sleep, and dreamed that I was walking in a nice green field, along the banks of a river of beautiful clear water. I looked across the river, and saw a flock of nice, clean, white sheep; but there was one black one in the flock. I stood still for a time and watched the sheep as they grazed leisurely along, until they passed out of my sight, under a bridge that I could see in the distance. In my mind I can see that beautiful river of water, clear as a crystal. I awoke, and the dream worried me for a time, and I often wondered what it could mean. For a long time I thought the black sheep might be myself. But no, it could not be me, for I was on the opposite side of the river from the sheep. But after eight years my dream began to develop; for eight years after I found that flock of sheep; yes, and the black sheep in the same flock with the white ones. I really believe he was a sheep, but a black one; for a sheep may be ever so black, yet it is a sheep just the same. It makes no difference what it does, it is a sheep, just the same as the white ones. I shall say something more about those sheep before I get through. After I got over my sick spell I had so much to occupy my time that I did not think much about myself, but would wonder about my dream now and then, until April, 1855, when my trouble began again, greater than ever. My husband's business called him from home quite

often, and I was alone with my two little children. I thought at times that I certainly should go wild, and would ask myself, O what is the matter? I had every earthly thing that heart could wish for. I had one of the best husbands, but yet something was wrong within; for

"When I turned my eyes within,  
All was dark and vain and wild;  
Filled with unbelief and sin,  
I could not deem myself a child."

Then I would ask, Can it be the work of the Lord? I thought if it was, he would perform it. But O the agony! It is impossible to describe it with tongue or pen. If I took the Bible to read, it was all sealed up. I could find nothing for poor me. I could say nothing but, "Lord, have mercy upon my soul," and, "Lord, save, or I perish." I was afraid to lie down at night to sleep, for fear I should never awake again in time. I would sit up in bed, then get up and walk the floor, and sigh and grieve and pray, until my husband would ask what ailed me. I would answer, "O I do not know. It seems like I shall go crazy, for I cannot sleep."

"I knew not how those feelings came,  
Yet felt I was undone."

I would pray, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." "Lord, save, or I perish." Some days and nights I felt my load of sin so that I could not work, but would walk the floor, begging and pleading for mercy, and would say, O that I could find rest to my weary soul. Then these words came to my mind,

"O where can rest be found—  
Rest for the weary soul?  
'Twere vain the ocean's depths to sound,  
Or pierce to either pole."

I would say, "O what shall I do? If I would tell any one how dreadful I felt, they would say it is all imagination, and that I must not give way to my feelings. But as I was not a free agent, as they claimed, I could not help or hinder, for those feelings came in spite of all my fighting against them, or anything that I could do or say, almost continually for a whole month; until one day, near the end of the month, my mind was so wrought upon that I took up my babe in my arms and was walking the floor begging for mercy, and asking, What does ail me? But all at once I thought I heard a voice. I was all alone, not a living soul near except my two little children. A soft voice said, "You are hungering and thirsting after righteousness." I looked out of the window, and the Scripture came in a moment, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Just then that great burden left me, and I could say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." Soon after I began, as I thought, to be like Thomas, so full of doubts. Yet I felt that God was able to save, while I was so unworthy. I was not worthy of the notice of one so great and good as God, and thought it could not be possible that God

could or would save such a wretched worm as I felt myself to be. Then I would ask, How am I to be filled? For I am so vile, so prone to sin, that I can scarcely think one good thought, much less perform a good deed. Then I would fear it was not the work of the Lord. Doubting Thomas never could have been more full of doubts than I. My faith was weak, and my foes were strong. I was fearful that it was not the work of the Lord. I would say,

"If it is, why am I thus?  
Why this dull and lifeless frame?  
Hardly sure can they be worse  
Who have never heard his name."

But all my complaint was, My faith is so weak. Not that Jesus was not able to save; no, not that; but I could not see how I could have been included in that covenant of grace. Yet if I was saved it must be all of grace.

"Grace first ordained the way  
To save rebellious man."

Paul says, "The promise is sure to all the seed." This was in April, 1853. After that I began to feel sometimes like I wanted to follow my Master down into the liquid grave; but there was none to put me in, except the Missionaries, as I had never met with one Old School Baptist in California, and did not know of any. But there were plenty of Missionaries, and when they found out that I was favorable toward the Baptists they insisted that I should go with them. But I told them I could not, as I did not believe as they did. I told them if ever I joined any church it would be the Old School Baptists, if they would have me. If not, I thought that I should remain alone. O how I did wish to see some Old Baptists, for I did love them with an indescribable love. But the Missionaries still insisted and tried to tell me that there was no difference. I said, "O yes, there is a great difference." And for all I knew and could feel the great difference, yet I had not the power to tell them or make them know it; for if I tried to tell them my experience they did not understand it, so I could not tell them. It seemed as though the Lord told me to cast not my pearls before swine, lest they should trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend me. So they would, every time I would say anything to them. I never found one of them that seemed to have traveled the same road that I had traveled. If they had, they surely could have told something about what they had met with or seen on that road; for as ignorant as I was, I should have understood them if they had told me that none but Jesus could do helpless sinners good. But they told me that Jesus had done all that he could, and I must do the rest. But I had not so learned Christ, for he had done it all, and I could do nothing but look. I could not do that, because I did not have the eyes to look with, until God in his mercy

was pleased to open them. Then I could say that Jesus died and paid it all; yes, all the debt I owed. What a glorious thought, that Jesus has died for a sinner like me; yes, died for me before I was born into this world; and that was why I was born, to fill the purpose that God had designed I should fill; for surely we do not have to be born to make us children, but be born because we are children. For Paul says, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Not to make us children, but because we are his children. Yes, he says, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. But to proceed, I will say that the Missionaries, nor any of those "do and live" churches, never succeeded in getting me into their snare or net. I can hardly tell why. O yes, I do know that I have been kept by the power of God. That is all that could keep me. I had not met with one that knew anything about my case. I did not even meet with one Old Baptist from the winter of 1853, in Indiana, until 1856. I met the first one in California. He came to my house two or three times. I stood alone until the fall of 1861, when I had found out where there were a few that were sound in the faith. They were living in Sonoma County, this state. Then I went in search of them, and as soon as I saw them I knew them, for they were the flock of sheep that I had seen in my dream, eight years before; yes, and the green field and the clear water. I told them that I had come all the way from Eldorado County to see them, nearly a hundred and fifty miles. I told them some of the Lord's dealings with me, as I hoped, and they received me on what I told them. I was baptized the same day, October 20th, 1861, by Elder John Mansfield. I have never seen him since. I remained with the brethren and sisters, and then returned again to my home in Eldorado County. I did not see them again until the fall of 1864. Yet I had a name with them, unworthy as I was. Since that time I have been roaming from place to place, and that flock of sheep have all passed away out of sight. The most of them have gone over the beautiful river. Methinks I can see them now on the other side, in that field of living green, enjoying those ever-living waters. Those that are left of that band have all gone to other lands, and according to the course of nature it will not be long until I will be gone over the bridge; for that is all that separates me from them.

"A few more days on earth to spend,  
And all my toils and cares shall end,  
And I shall see my God and Friend,  
And be forever blest."

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

E. M. HOLLINGSWORTH.

Ghent, Ky., Dec. 15, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am in receipt of a letter from brother B. F. Hines, of Sallis, Mississippi, in which he asks me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES some thoughts on what is taught in the eighteenth verse of the fourth chapter of First Peter, "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

It will be remembered that this language was addressed "to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." The apostle describes these strangers by saying to them that they are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." That is a wonderful description that the apostle gives of those strangers. They were the elect of God the Father. They were sanctified (set apart) by the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. It is written, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." These strangers were the workmanship of God, for they were created in righteousness and true holiness. All the great and wonderful things pertaining to the great Jehovah were manifested in preparing these strangers for the great and glorious inheritance to which they were chosen, of which Peter speaks and describes as being incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. They were prepared for that inheritance by being made the elect of God the Father, through sanctification of God, the eternal Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Peter calls them strangers; and surely they, and all the dear saints, are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth. The apostle in speaking of Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham, says, "These all died in faith; not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." They all were the elect of God; and the strangers addressed by Peter were like them; for while they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, yet they were all heirs of God, and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. But those ancient saints were looking through the revelations of God made to them, away to the coming of our Lord upon the earth, to make that great offering for sin, by which they were redeemed from the direful consequences of sin. Thus they all died in faith—died looking for the coming of their glorious Lord, in accordance with the wonderful things revealed to them. They were looking to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. Ah, dear saints, you look to the sprinkling of that blood as the foundation of all your hopes, and so

they did. The world does not look to the sprinkling of that blood, does not look to Jesus as "the way, the truth and the life." It is thus that you are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. You, like faithful Abraham, are seeking "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." That city is the dwelling place of your glorious Lord; and you, having the love of God shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost, are seeking that city which will be your future and eternal home, where you with undimmed eyes will behold your ever-to-be-adored Redeemer in all his glorious and wonderful character. While here below you see as through a glass darkly. Only now and then you have a ray of celestial light shining in your inmost being, which is "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." By that light you behold the beauty of the Lord, and are made to inquire in his temple. Yea, your chief desire is to know more and more of the wondrous character of him who to all the dear saints is the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. Then you in joy are made to realize in your experiences that you, like those ancient saints, are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and that you belong to that same people whom Peter addressed as strangers. But looking away from these scenes of sorrow you with joy are made to say, This world is a howling wilderness: this world is not my home. But all these things are evidences that you belong to that nation of whom the prophet speaks, saying, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." You keep the truth, because you are sanctified by the Spirit unto obedience. Looking at these wondrous things you are made to exclaim, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" No word in our language so fitly describes the dear saints as that word "scarcely." It means hardly; with difficulty. The dear saint when meditating upon that word has his mind turned irresistibly to this language of our Lord, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." This inquiry appropriately arises in the minds of God's people, Am I traveling in that narrow way that leadeth unto life?

"Tis a point I long to know,  
Oft it causes anxious thought,  
Do I love the Lord or no?  
Am I his, or am I not?"

Then they begin to realize and understand the meaning of the language of Peter, "If the righteous scarcely be saved." They, without any reserve, adopt the language of the apostle, "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." When they turn to the law, as the great and inflexible rule of right, and attempt to measure themselves

by that rule, they turn with sorrow and mourning to this language of the apostle, "Now we know that whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." A knowledge of the fearful deformity of sin, and its fearful consequences, is made theirs when they learn that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." Seeing the spirituality of that law, they cry out, "I am carnal, sold under sin." Then this language of the poet is made theirs,

"When to the law I trembling fled,  
It poured its curses on my head;  
I no relief could find."

But why, O why, mourning one, have you never seen and traveled this part of the King's highway before? This answer now comes welling up from the deepest recesses of your poor, mourning heart, I was then dead in trespasses and sins. I had eyes, but could not see; ears, but could not hear; and a heart, but could not understand the wonderful truth of the spirituality of God's holy law. I could not understand why that law proclaimed to all of Adam's race, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." But now comes borne to you on angels' wings the ever glorious truth of the gospel. That truth is Jesus; for he is "the way, the truth and the life." Now, dear mourning one, the eyes of your understanding are opened, and you are enabled by the Spirit to understand, and see some of the wonderful things which none can see or understand but those who are born of God, born of the Spirit. By that birth you were manifested in the kingdom of God's dear Son. That is a spiritual kingdom; and when you are manifested in it, you are enabled to see and understand spiritual things. You are enabled by faith to see Jesus, who is the end of that law about which we have been talking. It is then you rejoice; but all your rejoicing is in Jesus, because you see by faith that he on Calvary's bloody summit was the end of that fiery law to you. In that way, and in that way only, were you redeemed from all iniquity, and in that way he of God was made unto you righteousness. All things needful have been done for you by your glorious Lord, and in him you have given to you that righteousness which places you in that class of which Peter speaks, saying, "If the righteous scarcely be saved." But you now inquire, Why did the apostle use that word scarcely, when the salvation of all God's people was unalterably fixed in the mind of the great Jehovah ere time began? Ah, there is a time state for the redeemed, and in that state they experience the fearful consequences of sin, and their desire is "to put off concerning

the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." All that are exercised in that way belong to that righteous nation of which the prophet speaks, as we have quoted, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." But in time they bear about that old man, with his deceitful lusts. Those lusts cause them often to fear that they are not the children of God, and to pray more earnestly that their faith in the glorious Son of God may be increased, and that God will enable them to read their title clear to mansions in the skies. They know, yea, fully know, that their salvation is not by works of righteousness which they have done, but by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. But while clad with mortality their desire, yea, their prayer is, "Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked, from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity." This is the prayer of those strangers; and being surrounded with the cares, sorrows, gloom and afflictions of earth, they most readily accept this language of the apostle, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." It being the gift of God, it is an evidence to them that they are saved. But for that evidence they alone look to God, and rejoice in his mercy, which endureth forever. So far as their works are concerned, they cannot rely upon them for salvation; and when looking to those works they most willingly adopt the language of Peter, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" It is when looking to their works that they adopt that word scarcely; not when by faith looking to Jesus, of whom a messenger from on high declared, "His name shall be called Jesus; for he SHALL save his people from their sins." When the dear saints look to themselves, they tremble at the thought of using positive language, saying, I know I will be saved; but the word scarcely is fully expressive of the deep emotions of their hearts when meditating on the great and wonderful plan of salvation through the finished work of their dear Redeemer. But the inquiry is, "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" The word appear is the important word in that inquiry. Then who are the ungodly? Peter had in his pilgrimage on earth seen many of that class. To be ungodly, in the full meaning of that word, is to deny our glorious Lord, and to persecute his saints. This apostle had witnessed the fearful infidelity of the Jews, manifested in the crucifixion of our Lord, and in the persecution of his followers. Then the

ungodly appeared in all their corruption and deformity. Although they witnessed many of the wonderful works of our Lord, heard his words of wisdom, and beheld his pure and holy life, yet their cry was, "Away with him! crucify him!" Surely they were the ungodly of those days. The pages of history from those days to the present have been blotted by the narrations of deeds of persecution of the saints in all lands and climes. But the eye of the Lord is upon the righteous, and his ear is open to their cry. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" He says, "I tell you, he will avenge them speedily." But what fearful punishment awaits those who persecute God's dear people. He says, "But whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." The shores of time in all ages of the world have been stained with the blood of their victims. Their chief excuse for their horrid deed has ever been, that what they have done and were doing was to put down heresy. This was the language of the great red dragon, pagan Rome. All who would not bow to her idols must be put down and destroyed. It was the language of papal Rome, prefigured by the beast with seven heads and ten horns. All who would not yield to the decrees of the pope were anathematised, and were made to suffer the vengeance of the ungodly. It was the language of the beast with two horns, that John saw coming up out of the earth. That beast evidently represented the church established by Henry the VIII. of England. The persecutions in England and America of all who would not subscribe to the God-dishonoring doctrines and practices of that so-called church, fully attested the truth that she and all her motley horde of persecutors belonged to that class whom Peter calls the ungodly. Those who are persecuting any of the dear saints in this day because of what they call heresy, should look well to the motives that prompt their persecutions, remembering that God will avenge his own elect who cry unto him day and night. But Peter says, "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" We have seen that the ungodly have appeared on the earth through the past ages as persecutors of God's dear people. But now the inquiry arises as to the sinner, and the part he has played, and is still playing, in the great affairs of time. He is one of Adam's race; and while he may not openly and boldly persecute the righteous, yet his life, in which by all his acts he denounces the great plan of salvation, shows conclusively that he does not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ by a living faith, and therefore he belongs to

that class whom Peter calls "sinners." Unbelief is sin; and those who give evidence by their lives that they do not believe the great and wonderful things taught in God's holy word, are surely yet in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, and are in that class which the apostle calls sinners. They have appeared and will appear upon the earth till time shall be no more. The ungodly and the sinner are both embraced in one class, which the wise king of Israel calls the wicked; and they are destined to the same fearful end. Solomon says, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death." Here is presented the two classes, the wicked and the righteous; and they live a different life, and die a different death. "By their fruits ye shall know them." May they that have named the name of the Lord depart from iniquity. May they never lift the voice or hand in persecuting the dear saints. And may peace, love and harmony reign among all God's dear people, is the sincere prayer of the writer of these feeble and rambling thoughts, which our dedicated to brother Hines and young sister Emma L. Smith, of Albion, Ind., whose letter came to hand since I commenced writing, in which she asked me to write for publication in the SIGNS upon the same text to which brother Hines had called my attention. But I greatly fear that I have been filling too much space in the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and hence I admonish the dear brethren and sisters to address their inquiries to other and abler pens than mine. To worry in any way any of God's dear people, would be to me a source of deep regret, and I fear that some who read the SIGNS would greatly prefer that the columns of that paper should be filled by the pens of abler writers.

Yours in christian love and fellowship,

H. COX.

NORTHPORT, Ala., July 13, 1888.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Brother W. C. Greene, of Marietta, Georgia, requests me to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, my views on the sixth and seventh verses of the sixth chapter of Genesis, which read as follows: "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." I feel that brother Greene has requested a hard thing of me; for this, like many other portions of Scripture, is "hard to be understood," especially by those who, like the writer, are "unlearned and unstable," as also "unskillful in the word of righteous." I confess that it is with fear and trembling,

and a felt sense of my utter inability to instruct on those dark and mysterious passages of Scripture, that I undertake to comply with brother Greene's request. However, I will make the attempt, expressing such thoughts as may occur to my mind, trusting in the Holy Spirit to guide my mind and pen.

It seems to me that this passage of Scripture opens a wide field of thought, and that it must be taken in connection with the whole volume of inspiration, to be understood, or else we shall make the works of God conflict with his purposes. For the Scriptures declare that "He is in one mind, and none can turn him." "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." From the foregoing Scriptures we can see that there is nothing new nor old with God, and that the condition of man when God sent the flood upon the "world of the ungodly," "destroying them with an overthrow," was no new thing with God. God knew all these things "from the beginning, or ever the earth was;" and they were no doubt embraced in his "eternal purpose" and predestination. And yet the fifth verse of the sixth chapter of Genesis says, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Now I cannot believe that the God of heaven had just now found out what a wicked piece of machinery man was, and that up to this time God had remained in total ignorance of what man would do. Nay, verily, the Scriptures teach entirely different.

Now let us notice what the Lord said about the Babel builders. "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." Now it would seem from the reading here that the Lord had to come down on the earth, and go where the people were building, in order to see the city and the tower of Babel. It would seem that the Lord was a little uneasy about the matter, for fear the people would actually build a tower whose top would reach to heaven. Hear him: "And now

nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do." But can we for a moment indulge the thought that our God, the God of Israel, who

"Plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm,"

would have to leave heaven and come down to earth in order to be able to behold a little tower built by man? No; the darkness and the light are both alike unto him. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight. But all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" "Can any hide himself in a secret place, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." Many other passages might be quoted to prove the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of God. I will now quote a few more passages, to show the immutability or unchangeableness of God. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent."—Num. xxiii. 10. "And also, the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent."—1 Sam. xv. 29. "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."—Psa. xxxiii. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."—Psa. cxix. 89. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."—James i. 17. I will now quote several more passages, where the Lord says he did repent. "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."—Ex. xxxii. 14. "For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left."—Deut. xxxii. 36. "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments."—1 Sam. xv. 11. "And the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel."—1 Sam. xv. 35. "And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies."—Psa. cvi. 45. "For the Lord will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants."—Psa. cxxxv. 14. "Thou has forsaken me, saith the Lord: thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting."—Jer. xv. 6. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together."—Hosea xi. 8. "And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God:

for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."—Joel ii. 13. "Who knoweth if he will return and repent and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God."—Joel ii. 14. "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not."—Jonah iii. 9, 10.

Now, dear brother, I have quoted many passages of Scriptures showing that God does repent, and I have quoted several passages showing that he does not repent, and I confess that I am sometimes at a loss to know how to reconcile these things. The repentance spoken of in the verses upon which you have requested me to write, and the destruction of the people at that time, was evidently on account of the wickedness of the people. I cannot reconcile how wicked men and devils can carry out the purpose of God in their wicked actions and designs, and yet be held responsible and accountable and punishable, for those base crimes; but the Bible teaches it, and I must accept it as truth, whether I can understand it or not. In the first place, I believe that the Scriptures teach the unity of the human and divine natures in God, as well as in his spiritually born people. And there is Father, Son and Holy Ghost in the Godhead, as well as soul, body and spirit in the man. Whether or not the eternity of the "Man Christ Jesus" be true, it is evident that God has revealed himself in human form in all ages of the world to the coming of Christ. If you will notice in reading the Bible, the term "God" is used altogether in the first chapter of Genesis, and down to the fourth verse of the second chapter. In the remaining portion of the second chapter, and the whole of the third chapter, the term "Lord God" is used altogether; and in the fourth chapter simply the term "Lord" is used. I must think that these terms, as here used separately, mean something, and I believe they are intended to represent the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word [or Son] and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." Jesus said to his disciples, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," &c. I cannot believe that the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" in his eternal, self-existent and divine nature ever repented, or was grieved at his heart. Yet the Son of God, the "Man Christ Jesus," was "a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief." Jesus hungered, ate, slept, and wept over Jerusalem and at the grave of

Lazarus. He suffered, bled and died. Yet, for all this, he was "the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." He was the "Word that was with God, and was God." He was "God manifest in the flesh," "God with us," &c. Turning to the first chapter of Hebrews, and beginning at the eighth verse, we read, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou has loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." "He shall reign over the house of David forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." May we not conclude that whenever repentance is ascribed to God, that it is in his human, and not his divine nature? Again, Paul says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." It seems to me that God did not speak directly to the people, but he sent prophets to speak to them; and they used language that the people could understand—language that would convey God's mind toward them. It was doubtless Noah that told the people that it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and that it grieved him at his heart, and that God was going to destroy them; for Noah was "a preacher of righteousness;" and what language could better portray the indignation and hatred of God toward wickedness, than the above? They could understand the meaning of these terrible words; we can all understand it; and we should always try to remember that God not only hates wickedness, but that he punishes it wherever found, no matter by whom committed. Then, again, it seems to me that God has a secret will and a revealed will. I will only refer to two cases which seem to me to establish this idea. The first is that of Abraham slaying his son Isaac. God told Abraham to take his only son Isaac, whom he loved, and go out into a place he would show him, and there offer him upon the altar. No doubt Abraham fully believed that he must sacrifice his only son; but this was God's commandment to him. It was God's revealed will to Abraham. God had before this promised him that in him and his seed all the

nations of the earth should be blessed. So Paul says, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." "Accounting that God was able even to raise him [Isaac] up from the dead." Now I am satisfied that God's secret will or purpose was that Abraham should not slay Isaac; but he received him in a figure. Also, God sent Jonah to preach to Nineveh. Jonah began to enter into the city, and to say, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." This was the preaching God bade him preach. But the people repented at the preaching of Jonah, "and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and he did it not." No doubt Jonah verily believed that the city would be literally overthrown; but God's purpose was that they should repent at the preaching of Jonah, and that their wickedness should be overthrown, and Nineveh spared.

And now, after writing to such a great length, I can only adopt the language of the apostle, and say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Now, dear brother Greene, I fear that I have not satisfied you. I am afraid you will get to "wool gathering" again. But I have done the best I could. I have given you the best views I have, and I feel that I have laid myself open to much criticism. But if the brethren Beebe see fit to publish this, I hope that any brotler who feels that he can give more light on this subject will not hesitate to do so, for I certainly feel that there are many things in the Bible that I need more light upon. I have written what I have to comply with brother Greene's request, and can but hope it may prove of some comfort to all the readers of the SIGNS.

Yours in gospel bonds,

H. J. REDD.

ORTHODOXY.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Orthodoxy is not a Bible word; but we often hear it used in reference to a sermon or creed. Webster defines it, "soundness of faith; a belief in the genuine doctrines taught in the Scriptures." However, we need not go to Webster. We have the Bible. We need not consult "Reverends" or "Doctors of Divinity," to become informed in matters of faith. In the definition given by Webster, he speaks of the "genuine doctrines taught in the Scriptures." Are we to infer from that that spurious or false doctrines are taught in the

Scriptures? If we consult the D. D's. of this and other centuries, and compare their utterances with holy writ, we will find them widely at variance with the plain, unequivocal declarations of Scripture. Therefore let us read the Bible; let us search the Scriptures; let us study God's word; let us ask God for light; let us read the Bible prayerfully, reverently, with a desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus. There is enough in the Bible so plainly taught to engage the attention of the children of God, that they need not attempt to solve the mysterious portions.

I have been thinking much of late of creeds, and to-day I read a sermon (as reported) delivered by Mr. Talmage, on the fifth of this month, at Chautauqua, N. Y. The Brooklyn "divine" said many good things. He was speaking of orthodoxy; of the inspiration of the Bible; of "advanced thought" in theology; of the certitudes or certainties of orthodoxy. He says truly that "the Bible is not only divinely inspired, but it is divinely protected in its present shape." He vividly portrays the fate of the doubter, the skeptic, the advanced thinker, the Ingersols, and all that ilk; and then, in his own style, peculiarly his own, he pays particular attention to some of the great lights within the religious denominations, known as liberal or advanced thinkers; giving them the hottest place.

Now, brethren Beebe, some may deem me egotistical and presumptuous to even think of commenting upon or criticising Mr. Talmage's utterances. In attempting to present the truth, I do it in kindness, not wishing to be offensive. I ask all who read this not to be offended at me, and I hope the truth will not be offensive to them. I shall contrast truth and error. Let us hold fast to that which is good, and discard error. People in the churches even are prone to run after some new thing. That was the trouble with our first mother in the garden of Eden. She was the first victim of "advanced thought," and the consequences have been direful.

Read this from Mr. Talmage's sermon, and just try to think what there is in it. "If I see a man with a full bowl of sin, and he thirsts for it, and his whole nature craves it, and he takes hold with both hands and presses that bowl to his lips, and then presses it hard between his teeth, and then the draught begins to pour its sweetness down his throat, shall we snatch away the bowl, and jerk the man up to the gate of heaven, and push him in, if he does not want to go and sit down and sing psalms forever? No; God has made you and me so completely free that we need not go to heaven unless we prefer it. Not more free to soar than free to sink." Is that true? Is it orthodox? Jesus spoke differently. Turn to the sixth chapter of John and read Jesus' sermon.

In the twenty-ninth verse he says, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Could language be plainer or more specific? Will any one dare be so blasphemous as to deny it? My brother, my sister, your believing on Jesus is the work of God.

He says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day." Here we have the glorious certitude of the gospel. Here we have Jesus' words. He explains himself so plainly that a wayfaring man, though a fool, cannot err therein. Will you believe Jesus' statement or Talmage's? They are distinctly opposite; just as much so as were the declarations of God to Adam in the garden, and the declarations of that old serpent to Eve. Jesus says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Here we have the Father, Son and Spirit pledged to save poor, fallen sinners. I am so glad that God is truth. I am so glad that the devil lies when he tells Mr. Talmage, or any one else, that he is "not more free to soar than free to sink." Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." It is all God's work, whether we contemplate the wondrous work in the light of a quickening, a regeneration, a birth, a believing, a seeing, a hearing, a coming, a feeling after God, a drawing, a loving, a fearing, a repentance, a godly sorrow for sin, a convicted sinner, a redeemed and sanctified saint, or an heir and joint heir with Christ at the Father's right hand in heaven. Yes, and I thank God for the certitude. Christ says, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." "I am the true Vine, and my Father is the husbandman." Here we have the union of Christ and his church presented in the figure of a vine. That union is not made conditional or contingent on any act or will of the individuals composing his glorious body, the church. It seems to me that the advocates of this false notion of man's efficiency in his eternal salvation, wrests the foregoing declarations of Jesus. The Bible says it is grace, free grace,

and grace alone. And as "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," it necessarily follows that all that is said contrary to the above declarations of Jesus, and all like declarations of Paul, Peter, and all the other Bible writers, is false, and is inspired by the evil one, who was a liar from the beginning. Jesus spreads the feast for his family, and lovingly and sweetly and irresistibly brings them to his banqueting house of love. It is the Spirit that first awakens and quickens the dead sinner; and having been given the hearing ear, and his grievous blindness having been removed, so that he can hear the loving voice of his Savior, and see Jesus as the one altogether lovely, then, and not till then, can he hear the invitation (so-called) contained in the gospel, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." That is a command. It is in the imperative mood or mode. He spreads the feast; he creates the hungering and thirsting, and sweetly forces the humble, poor, trembling child to partake. He gives him new desires, new aspirations; for none of these come from Satan. God gives man a new heart, and writes his law therein, and imprints it in his mind. The dead sinner cannot quicken himself any more than the naturally dead man can restore himself to life. The devil is powerless to do the work, and I do so rejoice that he is powerless to hinder or thwart the Spirit in the work of quickening the dead sinner. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." Where is the boasted agency or instrumentality of puny mortals? One single declaration of Jesus utterly annihilates it; and I say it is blasphemy to say that I, or any one, can be instrumental in effecting my own or another's salvation. That must be God's work, unaided and unhindered by any power or creature, or all the powers of darkness and earth combined. O the comfort and consolation there is in this orthodox doctrine of the certainty of God working all things according to his will. He takes counsel of none, and there is no element of uncertainty or chance in his work. Does it not seem passing strange that Mr. Talmage would be so heterodox as to stand up in the pulpit and contradict the plain declarations of God, his Son, the apostles Paul and Peter, the evangelists and the prophets? John says, "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which sent him." God is a jealous God. All the glory and honor must be given him, for it is his due. Let us take heed to ourselves, that we be not led astray by such blind guides as Mr. Talmage. Let us take heed to ourselves, that we be not deceived by the preachers

of the popular churches of this age, who all preach a conditional salvation, which is false, and dishonoring to God. When I listen to this kind of preaching, the only comfort I have while listening to it is in the fact that I know it is false. Very few tell us of the glorious certainty of God's promises, and of his finished work that his Son wrought out on the rugged tree. They want to give man a chance. It is a certainty that poor sinners need. We hear a great deal about science, art and man's ingenuity, inventions and discoveries, and about the new fields that are opening up to our vision; but we seldom hear the old orthodox gospel sermon any more. We hear much speculation about the future state, and conditions and surroundings of those who have worked their way into heaven. We hear much about their saving the heathen, and of the means that are being brought to bear in bringing the dead to life; but we hear none of them say that it is the Spirit alone that quickens the dead sinner. Indeed, they tell the sinner that he is not dead. As to the state, condition, &c., of the redeemed in glory, the Bible tells us all we know, and that ought to satisfy us. It is silent about our identity, or our ability to know and be known of each other. This mortal puts on immortality; this natural body becomes a spiritual body. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." All for whom Christ died will be fashioned like unto his glorious self; for they shall be like Jesus; and that is enough to satisfy my soul. It is enough for me to hope that I shall arise in his likeness.

Now, brethren Beebe, if this meets your approbation, and that of the household of faith, those of like precious faith, I am content. I would rather write to the comfort and consolation of the dear children of God's kingdom, than to please all the crowned heads in the world, and all the world besides.

Yours in the best of bonds,

J. G. WILLIAMS.

QUINCY, Ill., Aug. 12, 1888.

#### THE WAY AND PLAN OF SALVATION.

GOD is a Spirit, pure and holy, inhabiting eternity. His being is self-existent, and that existence is eternal, without beginning and without end. His wisdom is inscrutable. He is all powerful. He is the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Before the heaven and earth were created, he purposed in himself the way and plan by which Jesus, his only beloved and dearly begotten Son, should be exalted and glorified. That plan embraced the whole creation and fruits thereof, which creation followed his eternal decree, Jesus becoming the salvation of such of the created as his Father gave unto him. Therefore "In the beginning God created the heaven and the

earth;" and as we read in Genesis, "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Every growth of the forest, from the tiny blade of grass to the towering oak; every living, breathing creature; the sun, the moon, the stars, and lastly man, in his own image; all resulted from his creative power, each to fulfill its part in that great and wonderful plan which God purposed in himself before time began. Jesus, while manifest in the flesh, at one time said to his disciples, "I am the way and the truth and the life." And as the Scriptures of truth as a whole are a complete testimony of Jesus, therefore every line of the sacred and inspired writings, from Genesis to Revelation, points directly to that way of life, which is Jesus, and opens up to the spiritual mind of the child of God the beauties and the completeness of the way and plan of salvation to poor, lost and helpless sinners. Of this testimony the apostle Paul says, in speaking of its objects, "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And we must never lose sight of the fact that the perfection is all in Jesus, and not in ourselves; for saith the same apostle, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." This has reference not to our fleshly bodies, but to the church of God, which is the body of Christ, and of which he is the head; and in this relationship the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works; for all good works emanate from Christ. And how is the sinner brought into this glorious way? In his fallen and Adamic state he walks by the light of this world, enjoying its enjoyments, following the vain imaginations and conceit of men. It is written by the apostle, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." While in this fallen condition we cannot come nigh unto him, because we are aliens and strangers; and besides, we have no desire to do so. And being far off, and in darkness, we could not do so even if we had the desire. We hear others, in the same condition, talking of the torments of hell, and of the beauties of heaven; and for fear of those torments, we make for ourselves a ladder pointing heavenward, by our own works, which, like the tower of Babel, never reaches the point attempted. We are, as it were, in darkness, surrounded upon all sides by loathsome, dangerous, creeping things; but having no light, we have no fear, because we cannot see them. "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ." There was a needs be that Jesus, the Son of the living

God, must manifest himself in the flesh, become subject to the law, and by obedience to that law, and by the shedding of his precious blood, redeem from under the law those whom his Father had given him. Now those who are the subjects of his grace are in due time quickened unto life, whereas before they were "dead in trespasses and in sins." This is the entering into that way of which Jesus said, "I am the way," &c. Now our eyes are opened, and O what loathsome sights are presented to view in ourselves! We are now ready to cry out, as did one of old, "Behold, I am vile." From the head, even to the feet, I am corrupt. In me (that is, in my flesh), there is no good thing. The fear of the Lord has been implanted in the poor child's heart, and this is the beginning of wisdom. In dire anguish, and with fear and trembling, having no hope from any other source, he is made to cry, "Lord, save, or I perish." Then cometh the still, small voice of the Spirit, speaking peace to the soul, which changes the cry of anguish to one of assurance; and now he says, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Following which, as in the twinkling of an eye, cometh the conviction, Lord, thou hast made me clean. And now therefore, says Paul, "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Now we realize the exalted position in which we have been placed, and desire to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. The light of God's countenance hath shined in our poor, benighted souls, it hath been shed abroad in our hearts, giving the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This is the pillar of a cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night (which led the way of the children of national Israel through the wilderness), and which will now guide us in the new and living way. While we had desired no better things than this world's pleasures, now we look with the eye of faith, as did Abraham, for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; for now we desire a better country, that is, an heavenly. And while we travel through the wilderness of this world, although we are in the world, yet we are not of the world. We want to meet with the saints, whom we now love, and talk of Jesus and his wondrous love; and while we are permitted by faith to look beyond this vale of tears, over into the promised land, yet our sight is not fully developed. We see as through a glass darkly; for it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." In the quickening, the formation of the child of God is complete; yet there must go on a growth in grace, a spiritual development, which matures not until that perfect

day, when our vile and corrupt bodies are raised in incorruption. Then only can we see as we are seen, and know as we are known. So as we travel on in this weary pilgrimage of our time state, with patience must we wait for the second coming of our blessed Lord, upheld by the spirit of his grace, restrained by his precious love, guided by his unerring hand, and kept by his wisdom and power, amidst all the changing scenes through which we may pass.

Dear brethren Beebe, I have written this with, I hope, the fear of the Lord in my heart, and submit it to your better judgment, whether it may be entitled to a place in the SIGNS or not. With christian love to the saints scattered abroad, I feel myself to be the least, if one at all.

B. F. COULTER.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

OWENSBYVILLE, Ga., Sept. 27, 1887.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE:—Though a stranger to you in the flesh, yet I trust we are acquainted in the Spirit. The subject of brotherly love has been on my mind for some time; and having a desire to speak to one and all of the household of faith, I thought I would take this method of doing so. John, the apostle, tells us to "love one another." He also says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out all fear." I do believe that when brethren love each other they will not do anything to bring a reproach on the church or wound their weak brother's conscience. But surely if they do, they are being led by Satan, and not by the good Spirit. I do think that christians should walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Just as sure as we run after the things of this world, just so surely are we fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. Why return again to the rude and beggarly elements of the world, seeing that we are new creatures, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them?" Now, my brethren and sisters, it does grieve me to see some of our brethren in this day and time running after the institutions of this world. Yet they say there is no harm in them. Now I would ask the question, Is there any good in them, knowing they are a reproach to the church and an offense to the brethren? Still those brethren that have attached themselves to the same say that the brethren should not become offended at such. Ah, brethren, is it not a departure from the faith? They say to us that if they provide not for their own household, they have denied the faith, and are worse than infidels. Brethren, are you not going down to Egypt for help, and not looking unto the holy One of Israel? Brethren, put not your trust in man, for "vain is the help of man." Paul tells us that "we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and

raiment, let us therewith be content." I do believe, dear brethren, that God's children should trust in him at all times. They should go to him in humble supplication and prayer, and he will bless them, both naturally and spiritually. If we go not to him for aid, to whom can we go? He hath the words of eternal life. When a brother is led off into one of the world's temptations, there is another ready to captivate him again. It seems that there is always something arising to mar the peace and prosperity of Zion. The church of Christ is the grandest institution on the globe, because it is ordained of God. It is called "an innumerable company of angels." Christ says, "Marvel not if the world hate you." "It hated me before it hated you." O, christian soldiers, put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Brethren and sisters, I do prize the church of Christ higher than any brilliant coronet set with the most precious gems. I do feel that if I were to so act as to bring a reproach on the church, or to offend my brethren, I would repent in sackcloth and ashes. We are told that "He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." Again, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." We cannot have much interest in the cause of Christ when our hearts are placed on the things of this world. David says, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Now the word righteous comes from the word right; and we know that Christ is right, and all other ways are wrong; and if we follow him we will never have time to be running after the things of this world, which all are to perish after the using thereof. Balaam could say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." He wanted to die that death; but I believe a christian would desire to live right if there was no hell to be shunned, nor heaven to be enjoyed. O that our beloved brethren would turn from every evil course they are pursuing, and let that sweet communion flow in one perpetual motion from heart to heart. "Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Why will you die, when you may live in peace and harmony? And, my christian brethren, when you are overtaken in a fault, and brethren go to you, and try to restore you in the spirit of meekness, do not turn a deaf ear to them, and make sarcastic responses, saying, It is a weak point in them to be offended at such trivial things. "Hath not God chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty?" I tell you, my beloved brethren and sisters, many things arise having the form of godliness, yet denying the power thereof. From such turn away. The children of God become so blinded

by the god of this world, sometimes, that they have no eye to see, no ears to hear, and no heart to understand. O, my erring brother, is there not a still, small voice within you, saying, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and I will receive you?" Know ye not that the carnal mind is enmity against God? Brethren, for Christ's sake turn your backs on the works of men, and your faces to the new Jerusalem. Would any of you remove the ancient landmarks which our fathers have set? Surely not. Beloved of God, watch: watch that ye enter not into temptation. "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Think, dear brethren, when there was no eye to pity, and no hand to save, his own right arm brought salvation. I call on my blessed Redeemer to bless us once more, making us to dwell together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. What a grand and glorious sight when brethren can see eye to eye, and speak the same things, even the things that become sound doctrine. I do rejoice to know that some of our younger brethren are asking for the old paths, which is the right way, and trying to walk therein. I know that the blessed Savior ever liveth to make intercession for us, and I pray that I may ever be found contending for that faith which was once delivered to the saints. What a comforting word is faith. It is by faith we view the promised land. The apostle tells us that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and in sins: wherein in time past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Then, brethren and sisters, let us not walk according to the course of this world. If we have been born of the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit, as obedient children, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. "For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit; for when we think we do the best we can, we do many grievous things; and from those things which we can abstain, let us abstain. Brethren, search the Scriptures prayerfully, diligently; for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and every portion of Scripture will apply itself without any comment. O that we all might adopt the language of Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for where thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part me and thee."

NANNIE B. EDWARDS.

WASHINGTON C. H., Ohio, March 22, 1888.

ELDER B. BUNDY—BELOVED BROTHER:—It is with much anxiety of mind that I address you, though my long silence would not indicate it. But, like Paul, the things I would do, I do not; and the things I would not do, that I do. So it has been with me for many months. The sorrow of this world is unto death. I have felt earth's bands were about me; and if it were not for that under-current of this living stream flowing from the city of our God, causing a little hope within, I should despair. Many times has it come bubbling up when it seemed I was at the point of despair, and my soul was sick within me. But O, dear brother, when we are left alone, to grovel in the dust here below, our eyes so bedimmed, our garments so bedrabbled, we abhor ourselves, and feel no voice within, crying, Abba, Father. Is it any wonder I am so loth to take my pen to call his chosen by the endearing name of brethren; claiming to be that which I fear I am not, when left to see the corruption of the body of this death? Yet notwithstanding all this, the question comes up as I write, If indeed your hope is vain, and your profession false, why all these anxieties? Why are you continually walking about Zion, wherever her inhabitants dwell, feeling every groan and sigh, every joy and gladness? Yes, I ask, Why is it? Let him answer who can. Though I am being tossed to and fro on the ocean of life, circumstances very embarrassing and uncertain to my earthly vision, yet there at the appointed time I sink down until I rest on those everlasting arms beneath, and find the voice within, pleading, Father, thou knowest my every mind. And though wounded and cast off and forsaken and persecuted, I would not bring reproach on the cause which I humbly hope is my first and dearest thought in my every trial and undertaking. At the present time I hardly know what is best to do, having sold my home here, where so many dear brethren have gladdened my heart with their presence. I will have to seek other quarters; and in this change my sincere prayer and hope is that by being kept in the way I will find my Master's brethren, as a servant of old did. I expect to remain here for the present. Sometimes I have moments of precious rest, when the Lord visits me in my solitude (for there is where we find them); when his promises are sweetly whispered in a believing ear; when I am made to feel that my Maker is my Husband, and he is able and will undertake for me. I was over to see dear sister Mary Parker some time ago. She pressed me to write to the brethren Beebe, as she was so illy able to write. She was very poorly, being attacked about every week with those dreadful chills. She suffers untold agony, but is still the same example of God's mercy and uphold-

ing power. She loves to hear from the dear ones who are so kind to write her.

If you think this scribble fit, you may send it to brethren Beebe, that those with whom I have been in correspondence may know that they are remembered by their unworthy sister,

CORDIA A. YEOMAN.

STATE ROAD, N. C., Aug. 9, 1888.

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE—MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—Will you be so kind as to give your views on the gospel, or in other words, define the gospel in all its meaning? Please comply as early as convenient, for there is some excitement among the brethren here in reference to what the gospel is. We have some here who declare publicly that the Bible is no part of the gospel; that there is no gospel in the Bible; that the Bible is not akin to the gospel. Those brethren who thus speak quote Romans i. 16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," for proof that the Bible is not akin to the gospel. It is said by those who take the position above named, that this is what distinguishes the Old Baptists from all other denominations; that is, all other denominations believe that the Bible is the gospel, and the Old Baptists do not believe that any part of the Bible is gospel. Now, brother Beebe, if the Old Baptists believe that no part of the Bible is gospel, there be some of us here that are and have been deceived; for this certainly is new to us. All that which testifies in spirit and in truth to us of Christ and the power of his resurrection as our eternal salvation, is gospel. I understand the apostle to give it as a reason of his not being ashamed of the gospel of Christ; that is, that to testify of Jesus as being the Way, the Truth, and the Life, by divine inspiration, was the power of God to the christian. Those brethren who thus speak are lovely brethren, and we hope that your reply will give satisfaction to all, and thus quiet all excitement. Please comply in connection with the text quoted.

I am, as ever, your poor, little, unworthy, and most humble brother in hope of eternal life,

WM. R. WELBORN.

(Editorial reply on page 201.)

#### PRICE REDUCED.

BROTHER J. B. Hardy, of Wellsford, Kiowa Co., Kan., has authorized us to publish a reduction in the price of the "Five Days Debate." For reduced prices and full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### "THE EDITORIALS."

#### FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Corresponding Meeting of Virginia, convened with the church at New Valley, Loudoun Co., Va., August 15th, 16th and 17th, 1888, to sister associations of "like precious faith" with whom we correspond, sends greeting.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—The flight of time has numbered another year of our pilgrimage with the past, and we have reason to hope we have been sustained through its changing vicissitudes and trials by the unfailing promise and grace of God; and as we are favored with another privilege of assembling in an annual meeting, we would, as in former years, write you something pertaining to the kingdom of God. And for your consideration at this time we would submit a few thoughts on the importance of brethren "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 3.

The saints at Ephesus, to whom these words were first addressed, were "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," and these blessings had been bestowed upon them according to the choice or election and predestination of God before the foundation of the world; the object of the choice being that they "should be holy and without blame before him in love;" having been "predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." After presenting these fundamental principles of doctrine, the apostle continues through his epistle to instruct, exhort, encourage and beseech his brethren to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. This epistle, with all it contains (as also all the Scriptures), is still addressed to the people of God who have passed from death unto life; and it is the desire of all who have been thus blessed with all spiritual blessings, to show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. But such is the depravity of our fallen nature, which wars against this holy desire, that we are often brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, and experience, as did Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But this holy desire prevails occasionally, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who giveth us the victory. The saints experience this conflict daily, even when walking worthy of their holy calling. But the words, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," refer more particularly to our walk and intercourse with each other, as "members one of another," and of the same body. The word "endeavoring" implies continuous struggle or effort to attain an object; and the object of our text is to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of

peace. This is a desirable object, and one, too, upon which depends much of our enjoyment in the things of the kingdom. "Behold," says the psalmist, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." How shall we attain so desirable an object? The apostle says, by walking worthy of our holy calling, "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love." These last quoted clauses imply that there is something to suffer, with forbearance; that is, something to bear with, without retaliating, or "rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing." If any have "erred from the truth," or "have been overtaken in a fault," instead of dealing with them harshly, we should labor to restore them in the spirit of meekness and love, considering our weakness and liability to err. In cases of trespasses and offenses, or anything that may disturb our fellowship, let us be careful to follow, not only the letter, but also the Spirit of the Scriptures, in order to remove any misunderstandings or difficulties, and effect a reconciliation. These are some of the things we have to endure with patience and forbearance; and when we realize our own infirmities, weaknesses and liability to err, we can suffer long with the infirmities and weakness of our brethren; and at the same time admonish, exhort, entreat, and, if need be, reprove in the spirit of meekness and love. With what patience, meekness, forbearance and faithfulness did the apostle labor to restore peace and unity in the church at Corinth, at Rome, and the churches of Galatia, and at other places where they had become entangled in the law, through the influence of Judaizing teachers, and had become divided, and in disorder in many respects. These things were left upon record for a guide and admonition to us, under similar trials, &c., and we do well to heed them. Brethren sometimes differ on points of doctrine; and if we express our different views in the spirit of meekness and love, it would not only tend to strengthen our fellowship, but also instruct and edify each other. "He that striveth for the mastery is not crowned, except he strive lawfully," or in the spirit and love of the truth. Our differences may, and sometimes do, consist as much or more in the language used to express them, than in the substance of the view itself. For brethren who may sometimes seem to differ on a point of doctrine, in relating their experience of the work of grace speak of the same travails of soul in passing from death unto life; that old things have passed away, and all things have become new; that what they once loved they now hate; have new views and new desires; tell of the same joys and sorrows, of the same conflicts and deliverances, and of the same blessed hope; all because they are born of the same Spirit, and

"called in one hope of their calling." It is this unity of the Spirit, as revealed in our experience, that we are admonished to keep in the bond of peace. If then we have a view of any point of doctrine which our brethren cannot see, let us not make it a bar or test of fellowship, but rather, as the apostle says, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." Paul, when "caught up into paradise," heard things that it was not possible for him to utter. On another occasion he said he had "rather speak five words with his understanding, that he might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." As long as we are in the body, "we see through a glass darkly," and see and know only "in part" of the mysteries of redemption. There is a "diversity of gifts" and a "diversity of operations," in the church; and while some have more extended views than others, yet all of the gifts are for the edification of the body. For such is the "unity of the Spirit," of which the people of God are born, and which pervades the body, that what affects one member affects all. "If one member suffer," says the apostle, "all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." What a close relationship this is, and how important to keep it in the bond of peace. Then, brethren, while we should not shun to declare all the counsel of God, as revealed in our experience and in the Scriptures, let us not strive about points of doctrine that are not clearly sustained by the Scriptures, nor "about words to no profit." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Being thoroughly furnished here, anything outside of this is unprofitable, and tends only to confuse and alienate, rather than edify and unite the people of God. The truth does not confuse and separate the people of God. On the contrary, it instructs, edifies, comforts and unites them; and anything we may advance that does not have this tendency and effect, is doubtful. For, as already stated, the gifts are "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith;" and "he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men." "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." And there is an inexhaustible store of these "things" in the Scriptures, both new and old, for our instruction, edification and comfort. Kindness and brotherly love should characterize our walk and intercourse with each other, not only as members of the body or church of Christ,

but also in all the relations of life. Failing to manifest these, socially or in business transactions, sometimes disturbs the fellowship of brethren. There are many things calculated to mar our fellowship, of which we cannot now speak particularly, but hope a word to the wise may be sufficient. How important, brethren, that we think of and heed these things, not only for our own peace, but for the peace and welfare of Zion in all her borders.

In conclusion, then, brethren, we would admonish you to "Put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel [complaint] against any; even as Christ forgave you, even so do ye. And above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." The love of God is the "bond" that binds the people of God together. It is the foundation and moving cause of all acceptable obedience to God and to our brethren. May each and all of us be "constrained" by the love of God to walk worthy of our high calling, "with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Amen.

We have abundant reason to be thankful to the God of all grace for his continual watchcare over us, and for the privilege that we have again enjoyed of meeting together in the assembly of the saints, of hearing the gospel preached in its purity, and, as we trust, in a measure at least of feeding upon that bread of which if a man eat he shall never die.

Our next annual meeting is appointed to be held, by divine permission, with the Quantico Church, Prince William Co., Va., to begin on Wednesday before the third Sunday in August, 1889, when and where we hope to meet your messengers and receive your messages of love and fellowship.

E. V. WHITE, Mod.

G. G. GALLEHER, Clerk.

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## EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

### WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

"FOR I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."—Rom. i. 16.

In compliance with a request for our views on the question what is meant by the gospel as the word is used in the Scriptures, we submit a few thoughts in connection with the text. To fully define the subject would require the whole power of that angel which was shown to John, as stated Revelations xiv. 6, and would occupy all the time of his ministry. At best, finite beings can only bear testimony concerning the infinite truth of the great subject. In its infinite and essential sense, the gospel is that Word which was in the beginning with God, and in the beginning that Word was God. No created being ever did either speak or write that essential Word of God. But the recorded testimony of that Word as revealed to those whom God has called by his grace is also called "the gospel of Jesus Christ."—Mark i. 1. The connection in which the expression is used must always determine in which sense it is to be understood. While it is true that all the power of the eternal God is included in the great Word which is nothing less than Jesus Christ himself, it is also true that the word of that testimony which in the Scriptures bears witness of him is called by the inspired apostle "the gospel." It is very necessary to bear in mind this distinction lest we mistake the import of that which we read in the Scriptures. Indeed it is the failure to observe this distinction which has led many zealous professors to suppose that they are called to convert dead sinners and give them the knowledge of God by preaching to them the letter of the testimony of truth. So the unbelieving Jews thought that in the Scriptures they had eternal life, even while they were engaged in bitter opposition against the ministry of Jesus in which those Scriptures were fulfilled. The word "gospel" literally means "good message" or "glad tidings." But in its use in the Scriptures it is restricted to that wonderful message which God has given in the revelation of his grace, in which salvation is freely bestowed upon justly condemned sinners. In this gospel Jesus is to be confessed as the whole embodiment of the great grace in which is manifested the clearest exhibition of the glory of God ever shown to any of his creatures. In this sense he is presented as being the fullness of that gospel of divine

grace which is revealed in him alone. Hence he is, in the primary and essential meaning of the term, himself "The Gospel." In that application of the term neither the inspired Scriptures nor any created being in heaven or earth can be called "the gospel." It must be remembered however that the inspired Scriptures cannot be in error in the use of terms. What is therein written cannot be wrong. In any seeming inconsistency of one portion with another, the fault is in our imperfect language and understanding. "Let God be true, but every man a liar."—Rom. iii. 4.

If the mere letter of the Bible were "the power of God unto salvation," then it would seem that the circulation of Bibles might result in the salvation of sinners who would have perished without those Bibles; thus the efforts of men to send the gospel to the heathen would be very commendable. But if any sinner should be saved by that work, we are not informed in the Scriptures as to what would be done with him. Certainly such a soul could not be in the company of those who were seen in vision by John; for they all ascribed their whole salvation to the Lamb who was slain for them. Since that company included all "the nations of them which are saved," it is evident that none of them were saved by the efforts of men in circulating Bibles. It was shown to Isaiah that the temple of divine glory was filled by the train of the Lord, who sits alone upon the throne of his own glory.—Isa. vi. 1. It seems inconsistent to say that any who were not in that train could be admitted into the temple after it was filled by the train of the Lord; hence, it is not clear what becomes of such as are saved by the schemes of men whether in circulating Bibles or by other popular efforts. If sinners might have been saved by the circulation of Bibles it would seem that there was no need that the dear Son of God should have died for their salvation.

As a consequence of the poverty and insufficiency of human language for the expression of the glorious revelation which God has given of his grace which is in Christ Jesus, many words are used by inspired men which have different significations in various places where they are written. While this is true of the word "gospel" it is always clearly defined by the connection in which it is used. When it means that essential Word of God which is exclusively the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, it is very distinct from the declaration of that truth by finite creatures, whether men or angels. In Luke ii. 10, the "good tidings" borne by the angel, is translated from the same original word elsewhere rendered by our word "gospel." While the fullness of this gospel in Christ Jesus is indeed "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," it is evident that

not even when preached by inspired apostles did that power appear in the mere declaration of the testimony of that truth which was unquestionably the preaching of the gospel. The divine power visibly displayed on the day of Pentecost was to reason only evidence that the apostles were filled with new wine. It must not be forgotten that the gospel itself is the eternal Word of God, and as such it is "quick and powerful," while the declaration of that gospel is only the testimony of that Word, even though that declaration be from the lips of men divinely inspired to proclaim it.

All who are led by the Spirit of truth will bow with reverent submission to the decision of the inspired record, even though it should condemn their most cherished theories and traditions; because the pen of those who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost has written therein the infallible decision of all truth. Regarding this distinction, the sincere seeker for light will readily find the true solution of any seeming inconsistency in the language used in the Scriptures on this as well as on all other matters concerning the faith which was once delivered to the saints. While it would be a vain thing to hope that any explanation could satisfy the carnal cavilings of infidelity, the Spirit of Christ will readily receive that truth which accords with the revelation in the Scriptures and the experience of the Spirit into all truth. To our inquiring brother and to all interested readers the suggestions here presented are submitted, praying that by the power of divine grace they, and we all, may be guided in the right way, and be kept from every error.

### EXTENSION OF TIME.

WE will until further notice receive subscriptions for new subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

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## OBITUARY NOTICES.

"O THAT men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men."

It has pleased the Lord for me to witness a death that I desire you, brethren Beebe, to publish. **Dration Mathis** died on the 31st of March, 1888, with relapse from measles. He was sick nearly two weeks. I was with him a good part of the time during his sickness. He was 18 years, 9 months and 9 days old. He married a Miss McKee. He was a good boy all his life. His father and mother were strict Old Baptists. I was with him in the last twenty-four hours of his life, looking for him to die every minute. Brother Hall and his uncle were also with him. We thought he was dying all the time, and I think death was on him, for he was cold to his knees and elbows, and the cold sweat all over his face. He sank at one time, and I told his people to come and see him if they wanted to see him alive. They all came and gave him their farewell kiss, and went out, never expecting to see him draw another breath. But to our surprise he lay there some six hours, every now and then saying, "Lord, have mercy." He would call his father and sister to him occasionally, but could not tell them anything, but seemed to want to say something. I noticed a different feature come on his face, and said to brother Hall, "He must be getting better. Don't you see a difference in his countenance?" He said he did. He would look at me and call my name, but could not go any farther. He looked so pleasant and pleasing, I thought he was certainly getting better. He called his father to him several times, and also his sister, but could not say anything. He would go away, and I would go out of sight he would call me, and continued to do so until their poor hearts were broken almost. My heart was almost melted within me. He again called to his father, and he came and asked him what he wanted. All that he could say was, "My father." He would repeat it over and over. His father said, "May the Lord bless you, my dear child, and receive your soul in heaven," and walked away. He again called to his sister Sarah. She went to him and asked him, "Do you want me to do anything for you, my dear brother?" He said, "No." She said, "I hope the Lord will bless you, my dear brother." He said, "Yes, Sarah. Praise the Lord." He came to his right mind in a moment, and the beauty of heaven was on his face, and he cried aloud, "Praise the Lord: sing praises to his name. O is he not a merciful God? Praise his name: sing praises to his blessed name. O come and let us sing unto the Lord. Praise his name. O what a merciful God we have. Praise his name. Don't you love the Lord, Sarah? Praise him, Mr. West. Praise the Lord: sing his praise." He clapped his hands, and told me to sing. I took the hymn book and opened to the words, "Children of the heavenly King," and sang three verses. He lay perfectly still, and said, "Sing another." I then sang, "Come, ye that love the Lord," &c. When I got to the verse, "Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God," he commenced slapping his hands, shouting and rejoicing, and praising God. I think it was like it was on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost fell on all that were in the house. I never saw such rejoicing in my life among Old School Baptists, and the dying man was shouting too. But some said we ought not to do that way. I think it would have been like the people were at the time of the entering of our Savior into Jerusalem, if we had held our peace the rocks would have cried out, it appears. He said, "Yes, praise him, all ye inhabitants of Jerusalem." The rejoicing could

not be avoided; and, to tell you the truth, we did not try to help it; for mourning was turned into rejoicing, to see life come forth from the dead. He told his mother the Lord would receive his soul. Although death was on him so long, yet life was manifested in his heart at the time he began to rejoice. As soon as his rejoicing ceased, he sank back again into the dying state, and lived about two hours, but would say, "Lord, have mercy," to the last. O what a comfort to see our children leave this world in the full triumphs of living faith in Jesus, though nature seems to bind, and we dislike to part with them. He left father, mother, two brothers and two sisters, together with other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. But we believe our loss to be his gain.

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world was.

M. H. WEST.

LEESVILLE, VERNON PAR., La.

**Elder James A. Bullack** departed this life at his residence near Goldendale, Klikiat County, W. T., April 13, 1888, aged fifty-seven years and eight months, lacking one day. His health had been failing for some time, and on the fourth Sunday in March he preached his last discourse. He was able to stand but a short time. A few days later he had a severe pain in the breast, and called a physician, who gave him relief for a few days, and it was thought he was slowly improving, until a few days before his death, when the doctor was called, and found him in such a condition with heart disease that medicine had but little effect. He said he was as firm in the belief of the doctrine he had been preaching as he ever had been, and his desire to preach it as strong as it ever was. He admonished the church to meet and attend to her business, and keep the house in order, and to live in peace with one another. He then gave directions as to his effects, and gradually sank until after four o'clock on the morning of his death, when he quietly passed away. He was born in the state of Tennessee, August 14, 1830. From there he moved to the state of Kentucky, where he was united in marriage with Miss C. L. Cook. He then moved to the state of Illinois, next to Iowa, and afterwards, in the year 1865, he crossed the plains to Oregon, where he resided until the year 1878, when he moved to Washington Territory. In all of these places he made many friends, and endeared himself to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, who will, like us, mourn when they learn of his death. If we have learned right, he first united with the Primitive Baptist Church in the state of Iowa, Page County, Three Forks of Nodaway Church, in November, 1859, and was baptized by Elder John Lambert. He very soon began to preach the gospel of the Son of God, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry on the fourth Saturday in October, 1861. His experience of grace and call to the work of preaching salvation, through the precious Redeemer, was published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, 1884, beginning April 1, and concluded June following. It will pay any one for reading it. We need not say that he was an able defender of the truth, for all who ever heard him preach are aware of that fact. His pleasant and forcible manner, when elucidating his subject, was always attractive and interesting to his hearers, especially to those who had been made alive so as to understand the truth of the Son of God. In this particular he had but few equals, and no superiors. He was a noble pattern, both in the church and in worldly affairs. He was a good husband, father and friend; and none can miss him more than we of this church, for he had been with us from our organization as a church until his death,

and was very seldom absent from his seat. His labors of love and his good counsel and advice will be greatly missed. But we feel it our duty to say, Thy will be done, O Lord. Enable us to say, like Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The declaration has gone forth, "Child, your Father calls, come home." We humbly submit to the all-wise decree of our heavenly Father.

The Pleasant Grove Church wishes that all friendly Baptist papers will copy the above, as a tribute to the memory of our dear brother, and for the benefit of his dear companion and children who survive him.

The church called Pleasant Grove, in council assembled, and after having heard the above read, ordered it signed by the Moderator and Clerk.

W. J. HESS, Mod.

T. G. FLANARY, Clerk.

"LET the sighing of the prisoner come before thee: according to the greatness of thy power preserve those that are appointed to die."

We are again called to notice the death of a servant of the Lord, and to mourn the departure of one of the children of the kingdom. But we sorrow not as those who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

Our venerable brother, **John S. Davis**, of Platte County, Mo., was released from his earthly career of trials and afflictions on Tuesday, July 3, 1888, aged 80 years, 11 months and 22 days. He had been a cripple for about fifteen years, so that he could not walk, having been thrown from a buggy. In his former life he had been a very stirring, energetic man, and his misfortune was consequently a cross very hard to bear; but through reigning grace he was enabled to bear it with meekness and patience. He had been in feeble health for a long time, and had some severe attacks of sickness, but finally passed away as a candle that has burned out.

He was born in Kentucky, July 11, 1807, was taken by his parents, while yet an infant, to Indiana, where he was reared to manhood. He was married in 1830 to Miss Margaret Denny, and a few years afterward removed to Missouri. Twelve children were the fruit of this union, of whom seven sons and three daughters lived to be men and women, and nine still survive, of whom all were at his burial, except one daughter, who lives in Denison, Texas. Sister Davis preceded him to their heavenly home about eight years, and since that time he has been almost anxiously awaiting the summons calling him above. I am not prepared to give the particulars of his first becoming identified with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church. I think however it was about forty years ago, in Buchanan County, Mo.; but the record shows that he joined Unity Church, Platte County, Mo., by letter, in May, 1852; and he remained a firm, orderly and consistent member until death. He was well established in the doctrine of Christ our Savior, and was a patron of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES until age and infirmity rendered it useless for him to take the paper.

He had lived in Platte County, Mo., a great many years, and was buried at New Market, beside his wife, leaving not only children and grandchildren, but a large circle of friends, and particularly Unity Church, to solemnly meditate upon the dealings of God with his creatures in this vale of sin and sorrow.

"O happy soul, who safely past  
Thy weary warfare here,  
Arrived at Jesus' feet at last,  
And ended all thy care."

Dear father, rest in Jesus' arms,  
Above the reach of woes and harms;

No sorrow e'er shall make thee rove  
From the dear bosom of his love.

Yours in tribulation and hope,

R. M. THOMAS.

St. JOSEPH, Mo., August 1, 1888.

DIED—At Westmoreland, Oneida Co., N. Y., June 22, 1888, our dear brother, **William Jackson**, aged 83 years and a few days. Himself and his companion, who several years ago passed away to the better land, were baptized at Westmoreland by Elder James Bicknell, in which church both held their membership until called away by death. For several years I had been quite intimately acquainted with this dear man of God, and am fully confident that he was favored of the Lord with a good hope, and died in faith. He was ever ready to speak in a feeling manner of that abounding, sovereign grace that saved him, and rejected as readily the whole system of works and creature merit. He was deeply led into the Scriptures, and found sweet comfort in reading the sacred pages. He truly was a good man, highly thought of in his community, beloved by his family, and at death was mourned for by all who knew him. He had many years been a subscriber to the SIGNS, and greatly delighted in the doctrine set forth therein. He leaves one son and one daughter to mourn their loss of a dear, kind father. I attended his funeral at his home, by his request several years ago.

May that grace which was his only boast be bestowed upon the surviving friends and family, that they may be resigned to the will of the Lord.

Yours affectionately,

B. BUNDY.

OTEGO, N. Y., August 6, 1888.

**Mrs. Josephine Walker** died at her home in Ashley County, Arkansas, October 18th, 1887. She was born in Lauderdale Co., Miss., May 11th, 1843, and was the daughter of R. J. and Martha Thompson. She was married to Wm. Walker March 20th, 1856, and moved to Ashley Co., Ark., in 1859. She leaves behind a devoted husband and eight children, with many relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. She never made a public profession, yet she was a firm believer in the doctrine of God our Savior, feeling her unworthiness of a name among the people of God; but she ever manifested a great love for them, making her house a welcome home for the Primitive Baptists. As a wife she was kind and unassuming; as a mother loving and sympathetic; as a neighbor ever willing to assist those in distress. Those who knew her best loved her best. Her illness extended over twelve months, and she was treated by two physicians, yet she grew worse. She bore her affliction without murmuring, and seemed to be perfectly resigned to the will of God. While we mourn the loss of one that we loved so well, we feel to say that our loss is her eternal gain. If it be the will of the Lord, may he work this dispensation of his providence to the good of the bereaved, and all the praise be unto him.

Yours in hope,

G. W. CALDWELL.

DIED—April 23d, 1887, **Mrs. Polly Barnes**, aged eighty years, eight months and one day.

She was the wife of Moses Barnes, who preceded her about eleven months. They had lived together happily for over sixty years. Nine children were born to them. Two died in infancy; the others (four girls and three boys) remain to mourn the loss of kind parents, who so often expressed the desire to go, if it was God's will. We know our loss is their gain. They were constant readers of the SIGNS for over thirty years.

Yours sorrowfully,

M. M. DUXBURG.

CHURCH HISTORY DEBT OF \$2000.

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TEXAS—W. H. Daniell 2, Mrs. M. M. McElroy 1, W. C. Flemiken 1, Mrs. M. V. Tyson 2 50, Mrs. Wm. Thomas 1, Elder Wm. Thomas 1.

VIRGINIA—W. H. Dawson 1, W. H. Giles 1, Ben. Butcher 1, Wm. Dalton 1, Mrs. M. M. Fowler 1, Mrs. G. A. Johnson 50c, G. A. Johnson 50c.

WASHINGTON TER.—Pleasant Grove 5 50.

Total.....\$ 129 85  
Total previously published..... 273 40

Grand total to date.....\$403 25

YEARLY MEETINGS.

A YEARLY Meeting is to be held with the Sugar Creek Church, in Putnam Co., Ohio, on the second Sunday and Saturday before in September. We invite all Old School Predestinarian Baptist brethren to visit us, and all ministers that can come. Those coming from the east, north and south will change cars at Columbus Grove and come to Rimer, where they will be cared for; and those coming from the west will come to Delphos, change cars, and come to Rushmore or to Rimer.  
C. G. MILLER.

A YEARLY Meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, at 10 o'clock, continuing two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth; especially ministering brethren. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take the train at North Avenue station, M. C. R. R., for Long Green or Forest Hill, on Friday before, at 4 p. m. Those coming from the north will take the train on the same road to Forest Hill. Conveyances will be on hand.  
NATHAN GRAFTON, Clerk.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE Juniata Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, with the Fairview Church, in Fulton County, Penn. A special invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and especially to the ministering brethren of our faith and order, as we are entirely destitute of ministers in the association. Those coming by public conveyance will have to come on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. to Hancock, Md., on Thursday. Be sure and be there by the middle of the day, and cross over the river, and there you will be met by conveyances and taken into the neighborhood of the meeting.  
AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas will meet, if the Lord will, on Friday before the last Saturday in September, about five miles northeast of North Topeka, in Shawnee Co., Kan., with the West Union Church, near brother A. D. Jones', and continue three days. Those coming from the east by way of Kansas City will be met at North Topeka depot, on Thursday and Friday. Those coming from the south and west at the same place. Those coming from the northeast by way of Atchison can get off at Kilmer station on the Santa Fe R. R., about two and one-half miles from the meeting, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting.  
A. D. JONES.

THE Licking Association will, providence permitting, hold her annual session with the church at Georgetown, Ky., on the Cincinnati Southern R. R., twelve miles north of Lexington, commencing on Friday before the second Saturday in September, 1888, and continuing three days. All lovers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, as well as the order of his house, are cordially invited to come and join with us in songs of praise to the Lord God, whom we wish to adore.  
J. W. ROYSTER, Clerk.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord will, with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday (19th and 20th) in September, 1888.

A cordial invitation is given to ministers and brethren of our faith and order to attend. Those coming on the Ulster and Delaware R. R. from Kingston will take the afternoon train on Tuesday to Halcottsville, and stop at that place, where there will be teams to take them to places of entertainment and to the meeting.  
JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

If it is the Lord's will, the Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Bowdoinham Church, commencing on Friday, September 7th, 1888, and continuing three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Richmond Station, on the Maine Central R. R., on the Accommodation train on Thursday afternoon, September 6th.

The friends of Elder J. N. Badger would like to see him once more in Maine, as it has been a long time since he visited us.  
HIRAM CAMPBELL.

THE Indian Creek Regular Old School Baptist Association will meet, the Lord willing, with the Caesar's Creek Church, Greene County, Ohio, on Friday before the third Sunday in September (14th), 1888, and continue the two following days.

Brethren and friends coming by rail from the south, west and north will come to Xenia, Ohio, and there change cars and take the Dayton, Fort Wayne & Chicago R. R. for Jamestown. Those coming from Washington C. H. will come on the same road to Jamestown, where

they will be met by the brethren and conveyed to places of entertainment and to the meeting. Trains arrive at Jamestown at 9:53 a. m. and 5:25 p. m. from Xenia. Those coming in their own conveyance will call on brethren John and Jeremiah Stevens, near where the meeting will be held. A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of truth, and a special invitation to brethren in the ministry of our faith and order. Come on Thursday before the meeting.  
ALLEN HAINES, Clerk.

THE Spoon River Association is to meet with New Hope Church, on Friday before the first Sunday in September (August 31st), and continue three days.

Greenbush is the place of meeting. St. Augustine and Avon, on the C., B. & Q., and Roseville, on their R. I. Division, are stations to stop at, and also Berwick, on the Iowa Central.  
I. N. VANMETER, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Conference of Maine will be held this year with the Old School Baptist Church in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, commencing on Friday, August 31st, 1888, and continuing three days. All that have a mind to come and meet with us at that time are invited to do so, for we shall be glad to see you. There will be teams at North Berwick depot on Thursday, the day before the meeting, to take all that come to the place of meeting. We now expect Elders Purington and Chick to be with us through the meeting.  
WM. QUINT.

THE Salem Association of Regular Baptists will meet with the Middle Creek Church, five miles southeast of Carthage, Hancock Co., Ill., on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1888, and continue three days. Those that come by rail will be met at Carthage, on the C., B. & Q. R. R., and also Wabash R. R.; also at Bently, on the Wabash R. R. There will be conveyances at each place. A cordial invitation is given to brethren and sisters to meet with us. Those that come will inquire of their railroad agent about the time of trains.  
C. G. SAMUEL, Clerk.

THE Concord Association of Regular Baptists, by permission of the Lord, will meet with the Otter Creek Church, on Wednesday, September 5th, 1888, at 10 o'clock sharp, and continue three days, at brother Enoch Hall's, five miles northwest of Girard, and five miles southwest of Virden, Illinois.

Those coming on the cars will come to Girard, where they will be met and conveyed to places of entertainment. Those coming from the south or the southeast should arrive on the evening trains on the 4th, as the north and west bound trains will not be in time on the 5th for the meeting. Evening trains' time at Girard, Chicago, Alton & St. Louis R. R., going north, 7:58. Jacksonville Southeastern, going northwest, 7:57. Those coming from the north and northwest will be met on the morning of the meeting, September 5th. South bound train on the C., A. & St. L. R. R. arrives at Girard daily at 7:42 a. m. Jacksonville Southeastern R. R., going south, 7:40. At said times trains will be met  
In behalf of Otter Creek Church.  
S. R. BOGGESS, Church Clerk.

THE Rock Spring Association of Regular Baptists is to be held with Mount Pleasant Church, in Carter Co., Ky., to commence on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888.

Said church is situated about three miles from Olive Hill. All Primitive Baptists are invited to attend who believe in the doctrine of predestination, election, particular atonement and salvation by grace; but we have no fellowship for

those who hold the doctrine of general atonement and conditional salvation.

Brethren of the Primitive or Old School order attending our association will get off the train at Olive Hill, and inquire for brethren Adam Wallace or Henry Hicks, and they will be taken care of.  
L. A. THORNBERRY, Clerk.

THE first session of the Roxbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the First Church of Roxbury, at Batavia Kill, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, September 5th and 6th, 1888, beginning at 10 o'clock a. m.

All lovers of truth are welcome to participate in the coming meeting, especially ministering brethren of our faith and order.

Those coming by public conveyance from Roundout or Kingston and way will stop at Roxbury, and from Hobart or Stamford at the same place, where the trains will be met from both ways, both morning and evening, on Tuesday before the meeting.  
WM. BALLARD, Church Clerk.

THE Galloway Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Darby Run Church, near Galloway, Franklin Co., Ohio, commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in September, which will be the last day of August, 1888; meeting to commence at 10 o'clock a. m., and last three days.

Brethren and friends coming east will come to Spingfield, and take the I. B. & W. R. R. to Galloway. Those coming west will come to Columbus, and take the I. B. & W. R. R. to Galloway, where they will be met by the brethren and friends and taken to the place of meeting.

All Old School Predestinarian Baptists are cordially invited to our association and to the solemn worship of the Lord our God.  
J. G. FORD, Pastor.

THE Sandy Creek Association will meet four miles north of Flanagan, in Livingston Co., Ill., on Friday before the second Sunday in September. Those coming by the Illinois Central R. R. will change cars at Kankakee Junction, and stop at Falanagan. Those coming by the Santa Fe R. R. will stop at Dana. Those coming from the west will have to change cars at Ancona, and stop at Dana. There will be means of conveyance to each place to take those attending to places of entertainment. A cordial invitation is given to brethren and sisters to meet with us.  
JOHN DOWNEY, Clerk.

THE Western Old School Baptist Association will, the Lord willing, convene with the North Cedar Church, two miles northeast of Attica, Marion Co., Iowa, on Saturday before the second Sunday in September (8th), 1888, and continue in session three days.

Those coming from the east will be met at Knoxville Friday noon. Train from the west at 4:25 p. m. Those coming at other times will inquire for Robert Bacon. Ministering brethren especially invited.  
THOMSON BRIDGES.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri will, the Lord willing, meet with the church called Three Forks of Nodaway, at the Union meeting-house, in Page County, Iowa, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Hopkins, ten miles southeast of the place of meeting, on Thursday noon. Also, there will be teams at Morsman, a station four miles west of the place of meeting, on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.  
THOMAS SHEARER

THE forty-eighth annual session of the Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Old School Baptists, the Lord willing, will convene with the Providence Church, Trimble Co., Ky., beginning on Friday before the first Saturday in September, 1888, and continuing three days.

Those coming east by rail will stop at Turner's Station, and those from the west at Campbellsburgh, on the Louisville & Cincinnati Short Line R. R., where they will be cared for, on Thursday and Friday. A cordial invitation is given to ministering brethren and all lovers of the truth.

E. F. RANSELL, Clerk.

### TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is to be held with the Otego Church, at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., Oct. 17th and 18, 1888. The place of the meeting is about ten miles east from Binghamton, N. Y., on the line of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company's R. R. The friends will stop at Osborn Hollow, where they will be met and cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

By order of the church.

CORBIN SCUDDER, Clerk.

A YEARLY or two days meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Waverly, Tioga Co., N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in October. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends present. They will be met at the the depots of the D., L. & W. R. R., L. V. R. R. and N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., on Monday p. m. and Tuesday a. m. The place of meeting is about one mile from the depots.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

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#### CALENDAR.

Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888.

Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.

Spring Session begins Monday, January 21st, 1889.

Spring Session ends Friday, June 7th, 1889.

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For further information address

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1888. NO. 18.

## POETRY.

### A PRAYER.

'Twas in the silent hours of night, my thoughts did upward fly;  
Strait is the road, and narrow, too, which leads to joys on high.  
While musing on this rapturous scene my heart seemed to glow,  
I longed to mount and soar away from this vain world below.  
Lord, guide me through life's pilgrimage, till thou shalt bid me come,  
The hosts to join in notes sublime that longed-for happy home;  
Many are the afflictions which to me do fall,  
But thy tender mercies, O my God, exceed them all.  
O may my soul on Jesus, the Lamb of God, be stayed,  
Who for my sins on Calvary's sacrifice was made;  
And may I ever bear in mind what love thou ever-blessed Savior, and God's beloved Son.  
And when my spirit's called away, and body is entombed,  
May it by God's own power be kept till he again shall come;  
In hope when the last trumpet sounds my sleeping dust he'll raise  
To life and immortality, his glorious name to praise.  
For that bless'd hour O may I wait, and ever patient be,  
In hope to see thy smiling face through all eternity;  
With adoring saints and angels in that celestial land,  
There to behold its grandeur, and in thy presence stand.

REBECCA WELLS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Canada.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### ROMANS XIV. 1-4.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I, and some others of your subscribers, request you, if you have no objection, to republish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES an article written by Elder Wm. J. Purington, and published in the SIGNS of September 1, 1879, beginning on the first page.

The doctrine of the Scripture investigated by Elder P. in that article, and his very wholesome and charitable views, I heartily indorse, and believe that such articles and such a spirit as it breathes are needed just now by our people.

Your brother,

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, Ill., March 21, 1888.

"I WILL call on that dear brother, Elder Wm. J. Purington, to preach a little through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES from the first four verses of the fourteenth chapter of Romans.

From a poor, unworthy brother, as I hope,

PETER MOWERS."

### REPLY.

The Scripture to which reference is made reads thus: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to

doubtful disputation. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth: yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand."

In compliance with the request of brother Mowers, I will briefly state what I understand to be involved in the declarations of Scripture to which he has referred; and, in so doing, what remarks I may make will be simply my views of the subject, with no other desire than to comply with my brother's request, and he and all others who have patience to read them can test what is said by the Scriptures, and, if found to be erroneous, reject them.

*Him that is weak in the faith receive ye.* In this chapter, and a part of the next, the apostle, as in the eighth and tenth chapters of First Corinthians, is setting forth in cogent language, and establishing in a very positive manner, the duty of mutual forbearance among the children of God; and although the subjects causing controversy often vary, yet the principles laid down by the inspired judge are always the same. The inspired apostle knew "that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one;" consequently, any things offered to idols were not thereby polluted, because the idol had no power, as such, to pollute what had been offered. "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Although such was the truth, and remains so yet, still we are informed that such knowledge in the apostle's time was "not in every man; for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak, is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat, are we the better: neither if we eat not, are we the worse." The apostle, knowing such to be the case, and that "whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no questions for conscience's sake; for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof;" but the knowl-

edge of the apostle did not lead him to separate himself from his weak brethren, for said he, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not." Such an example of forbearance toward weak brethren, and such refraining from what was lawful for him, rather than do anything to wound the conscience of a weak brother, or lay in the way anything that might "become a stumbling-block to them that are weak," cannot be too carefully heeded by all lovers of the truth; for said Paul, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Faith here seems to be used in direct reference to the doctrine of the gospel as a whole; for improper views of it, in any of its principles, generally imply something defective with respect to the doctrine itself; but it is seldom that the "infant in grace" has so clear a view of the truth, though such one may be three score and ten years of age when brought to a knowledge of the truth, as in after years; yet in the incipient state of his experience he is made to see clearly and understand fully that "salvation is of the Lord." When one is constrained out of love to God, love to the organized church, love to the brethren, to ask for a home in the church, and gives evidence that he has experimentally died to the law, that he has passed from death unto life, though he be in a condition of weakness as to many of the deep things of the gospel, yet if his words, his appearance and previous course, in attending the stated meetings of the church, are such as to show he is a child, receive such an one, and not reject him, and not say to him, Stay away until you understand all that the doctrine of the gospel embraces; for if that had to be the test, we should soon cease to have any visibly organized churches, for we only know in part while here in the flesh.

*But not to doubtful disputation.* A number of just inferences may be adduced from this phrase; but one obvious meaning doubtless is, that a weak brother should be received, without pressing him to receive views which as yet are not clear to him, by harrassing discussions on the points of doctrine into which his mind has not clearly been led. Such a course will tend to wound his feelings, instead of enlightening and edifying him; and should he acquiesce, without understanding what has been

pressed upon his mind, it would be no satisfaction to him; for disputation amongst brethren seldom, if ever, begets unanimity. If a statement concerning the will of Christ, quoted directly from the Scriptures, has not the effect to settle his mind, and produce conviction of the truth of the position, a lengthy discussion will be more likely to confuse him than to resolve the doubt. The Holy Ghost must give the true meaning and just interpretation of divine truth; and as there is a growth in grace, the various principles of the truth will appear more plain. Aged and talented brethren may not always agree in every particular thing pertaining to the gospel; yet if there be harmony of views on the great and fundamental principles of the doctrine, their fellowship should remain unbroken, and crimination and recrimination should not be indulged in by such brethren. It is only when gross error is contended for, contrary to the positive teaching of the Scriptures, that reproving and rebuking should be resorted to, and, if needs be, sharp disputation and indignation manifested, because the honor and glory of God should be fearlessly contended for; but there is, in my judgment, a vast difference between being weak in the faith, and contending, with much carnal zeal, for sentiments that are unscriptural.

To attempt to push one forward faster than he is taught by the word and Spirit of God, will cause such one to stumble, and will prove an injury to him instead of a benefit. The children of God seldom argue one another into their views, for in arguments it is too often the case that a desire for victory becomes the leading principle, instead of receiving instruction; and such controversies sometimes end in leaving each party more fully confirmed in his own opinion that he is right and his brother wrong. When it is necessary to show the weak brother his errors, it is the better way to exhibit in calmness, kindness and faithfulness, the truth in its evidences, by a direct appeal to his own experience, and then give him affectionate instructions drawn directly from the Scriptures; and as such one becomes stronger in the faith and ripen in his judgment by the teaching of the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, his mind will become more clear upon the various principles embraced in the doctrine of the gospel. The apostle does not admit that the views of them who differed so widely among themselves are

equally well founded, but that they were all brethren, having in view the honor and glory of God; and notwithstanding their defects in knowledge, and the difference in their conduct, they certainly ought not to be any the less forbearing to one another.

*For one believeth that he may eat all things.* The Jewish law, in its ritual of ordinances, was abolished before this time, for otherwise neither Jew nor Gentile had any just ground for any such belief. Under the legal dispensation, by express command of God, the Jews were prohibited from eating certain kinds of birds, beasts, blood, &c., which fact certainly had a typical meaning; but after the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, those prohibitions no longer were binding upon the followers of Christ. The apostle Paul, in a most remarkable declaration to the saints at Colosse, shows clearly that the disciples were no longer under Judaism, but completely freed from that ritual; for said he, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and, having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ." Also the apostle shows that it was no trifling matter that such was the freedom of the church, but he manifests a great anxiety in the matter, being thus led by the Holy Ghost; for he says, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." The apostle being led into the truth by the Spirit of God, well understood that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."

*Another, who is weak, eateth herbs.* The law of Moses did not restrict the Jews to herbs; but doubtless direct reference is here made to one so weak in the faith, and whose conscience was so tender, not having as yet had his mind so illuminated as to see that the dumb idol had no power to pollute the meat offered to it, in order not to violate his conscience would refrain from eating any meat whatever, fearing it might have been offered to an idol; for this does not refer to the distinction of meats by the law, but to the pollution of meats by being offered to idols; for, in the view of such weak one, it affected

the meats allowed by the law as well as the meats prohibited. Therefore the opinion of the pollution of meats by the mere circumstances of having been offered to idols as a sacrifice, might be entertained by Gentiles as well as Jews in that early age of the gospel church; and the thing that those weak ones seemed to be guarding against was not the breach of the law with respect to the distinction of meats, but the pollution of meats by their having been offered to idols.

*Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not.* Here, in this connection, it appears that the peculiar error or sin to which each party was liable is distinctly pointed out; for sometimes the pride of our carnal hearts is such that there is a great proneness to look upon and hold the ignorant in contempt, which sin is not sanctioned in the Scriptures as pertaining to brethren; and it would seem that such a state of things might exist amongst the brethren at Rome when Paul wrote, which needed correction by his reproving them in the manner he did. They who could eat everything, without exception, were strong, because they had just views on the subject, and the temptation was to despise their weak brethren. Let us carefully notice, it is the brethren they were forbidden to condemn, and not the thing which they did, for they must condemn the thing as wrong which they did; but I do not understand that they were to condemn them who did such things, as though they performed them from improper motives.

*And let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth.* This clause of the text under consideration shows that the weakness of ignorance is as liable to pass a sentence of condemnation on those who, from more enlightened views of divine truth, are not in the least affected by their scruples; for they who were weak thought it unlawful to eat certain things, because they had inadequate views of the subject; therefore they were under the temptation to judge unfavorably of the views of their strong brethren. And it is sometimes the case now that weak children of God are troublesome, by ascribing the conduct of their stronger brethren to improper motives; and it is clearly evident from the apostle's words that the weak are as liable to judge improperly as the strong are to despise. Therefore how important that all should heed the apostolical injunctions, which are equally binding upon both classes, for by so doing we shall inculcate brotherly love.

*For God hath received him.* It appears plain that God hath received both the weak and the strong, as righteous in his sight; not because of anything they, as men, had done or had not done, but through the righteousness of his Son Jesus Christ. It clearly appears to my mind that the receiving here being asserted of the one, and not mentioned of the other, must respect the thing in which he is condemned by the weak

brother; and if so, it clearly implies that the distinction of meats, with all the ritual ordinances of the law of Moses, was abolished; for the conduct of christians, so far as it conflicted with the law they were under to Christ, could not be accepted of God. Then the receiving here spoken of must have reference to the particular conduct in question; for the strong were received in their using things prohibited by the law, because the law pertaining to meats, drinks, carnal ordinances and divers washings was abolished; and if the word "receiving" had not this reference, it would be as applicable to the weak as to the strong, whereas it is here affirmed of the strong only. Though the weak are accepted with God through the righteousness of Christ, yet their weakness in the matter under consideration is not commended as a just principle to be inculcated by brethren, but to be borne with on account of their weakness.

*Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?* It is generally supposed by brethren that the person who condemns here is the strong believer, and the party or persons who are condemned are the weak; but the context, or previous declarations, show it to be otherwise; for it was the weak who condemned the strong, and not the strong who condemned the weak, as clearly shown in the third verse; for it says of the strong that they were liable to despise the weak. Therefore in the fourth verse the apostle, in a very emphatic manner, asks, *Who art thou that condemnest, or judgest another man's servant?* It certainly must apply to him or them who were previously represented as having condemned the strong; for had it referred to the strong, it would not have been said, *Who art thou that condemnest?* but, *Who art thou that despisest?* It appears that the weak were prone to condemn the strong, as though they were not all believers; but in so doing they were justly blamable; for they assumed the prerogative which belongs to God, who is the righteous Judge of his own servants.

*To his own master he standeth or falleth.* As the standing in the end of the verse appears to have direct reference to his standing in the profession which he has made, it certainly must have direct bearing upon his course of conduct while here in the flesh; for of the servant it is said he stands or falls to his own master, because he is accountable to his own master.

*Yea, he shall be holden up.* This person who is condemned as an unbeliever, or one who would soon waver and fall from the faith, would be held up or made to stand by the almighty power of God, and not the observance of the precepts of the Mosaic law; therefore the just conclusion is that the improper views each class might entertain of the other would not affect their final destiny, although much confusion might be caused in the visibly organized church by such an unjust judgment.

*For God is able to make him stand.* The certainty and finality of his standing is rested on God's ability to hold him up, and not on the creature man's ability to stand in his own strength; for the strong are as liable to fall as the weak; for nothing can hold up either but the power of God. This is very important, for it shows that a man's standing is not in himself; for said the prophet Jeremiah, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." And it is also important, as it secures the standing of all true disciples beyond the possibility of a failure; for this standing is as sure as God's power, because the great matter rests upon God's, and not man's, ability. And although there may be dissensions, ill feelings, and various difficulties in the church in her militant state, but to say, on account of such things, that any of God's chosen people will finally fall and eternally perish, is to say that their heavenly Father is not able to hold them up, which is openly and positively denying God's power.

I expect that brother Mowers wishes something said about the weak and strong in our day, for there are weak and strong now; but there may not be the same things literally to cause differences as when Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans; but there are matters involving the same principles; and now the admonition of Paul, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves," is just as binding as when written. There are some weak brethren to-day who are somewhat entangled in legality; for we sometimes meet some who think that the first day of the week is in some way rather better than any other day; that it is wrong and sinful to have any means of public conveyance upon that day; that there should be no mails forwarded, &c. Now such weak minded ones, in those things, should not be dealt with in a harsh manner, but should be dealt with in a kind and loving manner, and the errors which they cling to be shown them in Bible language; and as long as they introduce nothing into the church to cause any trouble, such weakness should be borne with. On the other hand, they who have such scruples about certain things upon the first day of the week, should be very careful not to condemn them who have not such scruples; for "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Another lamentable weakness is sometimes manifested by some who are ministers, and stand as watchmen; for frequently, when with their brethren, they have a vast amount of fault to find with their brother ministers; one is too "nervous" when he speaks; another's appearance in the pulpit is "repulsive;" another speaks too "loud;" another is very "prolix" in his remarks, &c. Now

those who pursue such a course exhibit a great weakness and a peculiar infirmity; but they are to be borne with, and when there is a proper opportunity, should be reproved. Another weakness is jealousy because more persons will assemble to hear one man than another, and remarks like the following are made, "I cannot see why all do not receive the same attention," &c. That feeling shows a great weakness, and is to be borne with, and not made a test of fellowship. Another weakness is that there are certain buildings in which the church ought not to assemble for worship. The writer of this article has occasionally spoken for the Salem Church, in Philadelphia, in a room in which nearly all kinds of societies meet during the week, and their "mottoes" are hanging upon the walls; but because such is the fact, it no more pollutes the room than the dumb idol did the meats. He has often spoken in a hotel on Sunday afternoons to large congregations, and once in a theatre, because the church could get no other place to assemble; but he does not feel to make a test of the matter, because some weak brethren think such rooms have been polluted. Neither is it just to condemn him for speaking in such places; for when members are so situated that they can obtain no other suitable place in which to assemble, the servant of God is justified in proclaiming the gospel in those places, as much as he would be in a hundred thousand dollar meeting-house.

These remarks might be extended to a great length, but I have already said enough to give you an idea of what my views are on the subjects involved in the Scripture to which you called my attention, brother Mowers, and it may be that the few thoughts penned down may cause your mind to have enlarged views upon the subject, and, if so, I shall not have written in vain.

WILLIAM J. PURINGTON.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., July 31, 1879.

MARYVILLE, Oregon, April 10, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I thought of giving you and your many readers a history of what I humbly hope and sometimes believe have been the dealings of God with my soul, hoping some trembling soul may thereby be comforted.

I was born and raised in Missouri. There is nothing of peculiar interest in my natural history, more than that I had a strong interest for the Old Baptists and their doctrine, being raised under that influence. I cannot recollect my first impressions religiously. From my earliest recollections I thought a change was necessary in order to meet God in peace, but thought I could do something to bring it about; hence at times I would make some strong resolves and efforts, and sometimes would think I was getting along very well; and when I would see my brothers do anything wicked or

wrong, I would rebuke them sharply. I went on in this way till I was about eighteen years old, when myself and father, then living in southwest Missouri, went to stay over night with a Missionary Baptist preacher. Father and he had a great deal of talk that night, in which they differed very much. The next day they both preached at his house. At the close of that meeting I had a feeling I do not think I ever had before. An indescribable burden took hold of my mind. For about three hours I was about as miserable as one could well be, with the thought that there was a glorious home in heaven for God's people, but I was left out. My sins at that time were not revealed to me. This wore off in about three hours. Nothing of interest took place for about six months after that time, as well as I can recollect. I had been to a Methodist meeting, and on my way home, while engaged in sin, and drinking it down as an ox does water, my eyes were immediately opened to behold for the first time that I was an awful sinner in the sight of a holy and just God. I there and then made the resolve that I would never again stop seeking for his grace till I had an evidence of his love. There I commenced to implore his mercy. Now, right here I will say, I never have relished sin from that day to this, though I have sinned many times, indeed. I would remark again, that though I felt myself to be a great sinner, I thought my seeking and prayers would initiate me into the favor of God; therefore I prayed most fervently; but the more I tried to pray, the farther off I seemed to get; but still I could not give it up, but thought by begging I could move God to pity me. This earnest desire, and aversion to sin, and burden of guilt, remained with me, at intervals, for three years. Sometimes it would measurably leave me for a time, to return again, perhaps with double weight. Thus I continued to seek and implore God for mercy.

Here I will state that during all this time I had a greater love for the Old Baptists, or God's people, than I ever before had in the world, and also for the dear Savior. I would have given the world and all it contains, if at my command, for an evidence that I was worthy of a place among the Old School Baptists, which I regarded, and do yet, as the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. I believed there was a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. I believed he died on the cross for sinners, and what he did was sufficient. But O! I have no evidence that this was done for me. If I had an evidence that Jesus was mine and I was his, then my mourning would be turned to joy, my thirsty soul would be filled. If the gold of Ophir, the silver of Peru, and the cattle of a thousand hills, were at my command, I would say, Take them all, and give me Jesus. Yea, a hope in the blessed Jesus.

I would have cheerfully endured any bodily punishment that God would have seen fit to lay upon me, if it would have given me a reliable assurance that Jesus was mine.

Thus I traveled in gloom and sorrow, until it seemed mine was an outside case; and my prayers that I thought on the start would procure his favor, were completely shut out, and availed me nothing. Then I thought of making my case known to the church, and asking their prayers; but this I never did. To give up and look out of self to Jesus, is something no poor sinner can do, in and of himself. I did everything that was in my power to do to secure his favor, until I despaired. Yea, I knew I could not do anything. In this condition of almost hopeless despair I remained for several days, realizing with the poet that

"Drops of grief can ne'er repay  
The debt of love I owe;  
Here, Lord, I give myself away,  
'Tis all that I can do."

In this condition I laid down one night as usual. It seems that I dropped to sleep. My burden of sin and condemnation seemed to be crushing me beneath its weight. Right here is a short period my pen fails to portray, in the midst of which there was a voice spoken from heaven, as I was sure, not to the external ear, but to the hidden man of the heart, which immediately awoke me. The words I heard were, "This is a balm sufficient to heal your wounds." My mind was called to these words of Scripture, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" Jesus was there, and presented to my mind as the great Physician of my soul; the result of which was, my heart was ravished and broken up; my burden I had carried for three years was all gone.

I had ever expected, if I obtained a saving hope in him, I would see some great light shine around me, and I would immediately go to shouting aloud for joy; neither of which I realized at that time. Truly he leads the blind in a way they know not; and because I did not see it as I expected, I tried hard not to rely on it; and in the place of telling my wife the next morning that I had gained a hope, and found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, I told her I had had a revelation from the eternal world. Of that I had no doubt; but what it meant I did not fully know. But while telling her of my visitation, my heart was filled to overflowing.

Not long after this I told some of the members of the church what I have written, and they seemed to rejoice, and told me I should be thankful to God for such an evidence of his love. But presently the thought came to my mind, "Now what have you done? You have made them believe you are born of God, and you know you are not; therefore you know you are a hypocrite;" and if I could have had it back, I would not have told it for the world.

During this time the subject of

baptism took hold of my mind. It was strongly impressed upon my mind that I ought to follow the Savior in baptism; and the love I had for the brethren, and the beauty I saw in the order and ordinances of his house, my pen fails to present.

This led me to a careful and, I hope, prayerful examination of myself and the ground of my hope. Hypocrisy is something I always detested, and the tempter would say, If you offer yourself, you will be practicing hypocrisy; and they require an experience, and you have nothing to tell. Still I could not get rid of the impression that it was my duty to be baptized. And here I will say, if any of the little ones should chance to read this, who are thus impressed, Take his yoke upon you immediately, and you will find rest to your weary souls.

I attended meeting at what is called Fellowship Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists, under the care of Elder John Turnidge. After listening to a heavenly discourse, the door being announced open for the reception of members, and that good old hymn sung,

"Am I a soldier of the cross,  
A follower of the Lamb?" &c.,

the desire I had to follow the loving Lamb none know but those who are thus led. But O the weakness of the flesh and the suggestions of the tempter! Thus I sat trembling and weeping, until they sang this verse,

"Sure I must fight if I would reign,  
Increase my courage, Lord."

Then it seemed I was in their midst before I hardly knew what I was doing. I began to tell them some of what I have here written, and told them I thought them capable of judging my case, and if they thought I was a subject of God's grace I wanted to live with them, as I thought they would deal honestly with me. But I noticed, as I told my exercises, brethren seemed to be melted to tears. The vote was taken, and I was received. Singing continued, while the hand of fellowship was extended, and I must say our hearts were filled with joy to overflowing.

But this season lasted only for a short time; for before I got home Satan was let loose on me, and told me I was not only deceived myself, but had deceived the church of God, and was therefore worthy of nothing but eternal damnation. O! the horror that seized my mind I cannot express. Sleep fled from me. I rolled to and fro on my bed for four nights, seeking deliverance from this awful snare. While I lay on my bed, despairing of any hope, Jesus revealed himself unto me as he does not unto the world. I had a view of him on the cross. O the sudden change it produced in my mind, from horror and despair, to peace that passeth all understanding. O the joy I realized, tongue cannot express. It was a heaven below my Redeemer to know. I walked in the

light of this visitation for a short

time. My baptism was put off for one month. Before the time came, notwithstanding I had such an evidence as I have just described, I passed through many trials, and really came to the conclusion that I would refuse to be baptized. I went to meeting with that view, unless I should receive a great degree of assurance that God was with me.

We met, and at the close of the meeting Jesus immediately appeared in our midst, saying, "Peace, be still," and there was a great calm. His blessed image reflected long in the countenances of the brethren. We gave each other our hands and hearts, realizing a heavenly peace in Christ Jesus our Lord. Baptism was announced at the close. We repaired to the water while singing a sweet song of Zion. We went down into the water, and after being buried, and arising therefrom, I beheld the multitude of brethren at the water's edge as being the most lovely congregation my eyes ever beheld, and could understand the language of the psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

It was not long till I was strongly impressed that God required me to bear testimony of the riches of his grace; which work I have, as providence gave opportunity, been engaged in for seventeen years, and have had many fiery trials to pass through, both temporally and spiritually; also many happy seasons with the dear people of God, of which I hope to speak in another communication, if this meets the approval of the editors.

In my next I wish to write of my call to the ministry, if I have one, together with the trials and afflictions I have encountered by the fiery darts of the enemy; and the peace, joy and assurance I have had, if not deceived, in the smiles and visitations of my blessed Redeemer. I will now say, His love is more than a match for my heart. His goodness and mercy endureth forever, and his faithfulness endureth to all generations; yea, he is a shield and a buckler to all that put their trust in him.

Brethren editors, I am greatly rejoiced at and with the spirit in which your papers are conducted. I am taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is sent to me by the brethren, I not being able to pay for them. My soul has been made to rejoice within me while reading the dealings of God with his dear people, and the able productions of the editors. I have been greatly comforted by the writings of dear brethren Welborn, Lee Hanks, and J. H. Yeoman, of Colorado; also brethren Durand, F. A. Chick, John Stipp, and in fact, most all I see is food for the hungry, clothing for the naked, rest for the weary. Therefore, brethren editors and correspondents, may God spare you long to bear testimony to the riches of his glorious grace; and accept this, my little mite, as from one

who has ever felt to be less than the least of all saints, if one at all.

Brethren, if this should come before the people of God, and any of God's children can derive any comfort from so imperfect a sketch of the trials and tribulations of one that humbly desires the welfare of Zion and the prayers of all the faithful, I will feel that I am more than recompensed.

Unworthily, a brother in the best of bonds,

J. C. TURNIDGE.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., May 4, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed I send a letter from one who, by experience, knows of what she has written: on the one hand, much sickness and suffering; and on the other, much comfort from the Lord. I think it may do many of the afflicted ones good. It has done me good.

As ever, your brother in the hope of Christ,

F. A. CHICK.

WHITEFIELD, Maine, April 15, 1888.

ELDER CHICK—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I received a letter from dear sister Attie, with one of your letters to her inclosed, saying that your dear wife was improving. I was so glad to hear it. I have felt your sorrow deeply ever since I heard of your wife's illness, and I do hope it is God's will to raise her up again to you and your family, as you all need her love and care so much. There is no love like a mother's love, and no one can fill a mother's place. And to lose a dear companion is like separating a part of ourselves. No one can know the heartfelt agony and loneliness but those who have passed through the same; for we must experience the same thing to know it for ourselves. I enjoyed your letter much, and was glad to hear that you had been supported so wonderfully in your trouble. Though our God afflicts with one hand, he upholds with the other; and as our days, so shall our strength be. I know this by experience; for I have been supported and upheld in all my sickness, trials and afflictions through which I have been called to pass. I know the truth of those precious promises which are left on record for us. God's people are chosen in the furnace of affliction. Surely, my brother, we cannot take one step outside that path appointed for each one of his little ones to walk in. Neither do we have to walk alone; for the eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. Though we walk through the fire, we shall not be burned.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;  
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,  
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress."

Dear brother, your communication

in the SIGNS of February first, on the words of David, "My times are in thy hand," was beautiful. It was so rich and full, it has been a great comfort to me. I do think that our God, in whom you trust, has been preparing you to meet your trouble. It seems to me you are made to see and feel the weight of those words. Surely, dear brother, this time of trouble which you are in is in his hand, and he will carry you through. He is leading you in paths you had not known; but he will make darkness light before you, and crooked things straight. These things will he do for you, and not forsake you. Our times are measured out to us according to his supreme will.

David must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely; that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times. I think every believer must learn this sooner or later; and not only know it, but also love it and rejoice in it. I know this is true, for I have been made to rejoice in deep afflictions, because the Lord had done it.

I often think of a remark you made in one of your communications, which touched me; that God does not guide his people as a hireling guides a stranger, but as a mother guides her child; that this journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man, groping in the dark; but the ordered pathway of the Father, safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. O how glad I am that it is so; that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I have thought much upon the Scriptures this winter, and read a great deal. I feel sometimes that I am more established in the gospel of God our Savior. I think sometimes my mind has been led more understandingly into the Scriptures of divine truth; and I am fully persuaded that we cannot understand any of the precious truth contained in the Bible except by revelation. This precious gospel of Christ, O how I love it; the foreknowledge and predestination of all things. Take away predestination, and you take away my hope. O that wondrous love of God which was shed abroad in my heart, causing me to love this gospel of salvation by grace, and by grace alone. It seems to me that love is what constitutes a christian. It is the very essence of the gospel. Love is the foundation of the believer's hope; for he that loveth is born of God. O how much there is in the word love. Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it. This is a love that can never die; for it is begotten of God, our heavenly Father. Once we did not know this love; but when it was given to us, we received new life and light; old things had passed away, and behold, all things had become new. We were completely turned about. The things we once loved, now we hate; and those we knew nothing about, we now love. It seemed to me I was like another

being; like I had been translated into a new world, and beheld a new heaven and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness. I then thought I was free from sin. I thought I never again could feel pain or sickness or sorrow; that nothing could mar my peace. But I had great lessons to learn in the future. I have been made to learn sorrow and affliction, pain and sickness; and I am glad that I have. You may think this a strange expression for one to use; but it is nevertheless true; for if I had not known what it was to suffer, I could not have known the abounding consolation and resignation of God's presence with me in times of sorrow and trouble. If I had not known affliction, I could not claim the evidence that God's people have, that they are chosen in the furnace of affliction. If a follower of Christ, we must follow in his footsteps. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

I will now draw my scribble to a close. I have for a long time thought I would like to write you, but fear has kept me from it, and with much fear and trembling I have to-day made the attempt. If I had the gift and ability of my brethren and sisters, it seems to me I should have no fears. Another thing with me is pride, the wicked pride of my heart.

Now, my brother, may God bless you, comfort and support you, and fill you with that love and peace which passeth all understanding. Please remember me to your wife in love and sympathy.

Your unworthy sister in hope of eternal life,

ELLA L. PULSIFER.

PALESTINE, Texas, Aug. 2, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I desire to say something to the dear brethren and friends who read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I have had this desire for some time. When I am through, and the same has reached you, then it is to be disposed of after your good judgment. I am satisfied that nothing but the truth will be of any lasting benefit to God's dear people. Much of late has been said by able and gifted brethren on the subjects of predestination and the again birth, and I find that no one who is writing for the SIGNS is laying in any complaint. My brethren, I would be glad if it were so here; but it is not. This unlimited predestination doctrine, which the SIGNS abounds with, is much abused by many of the brethren. The association which the little church that I am a member of belongs to, is opposed to the doctrine of unlimited predestination. I am hurt on account of it, and I want you, brethren, to know it. Not that I want to stir up any strife, but because the brethren that I love and am associated with do abuse the very groundwork or foundation of all that I fix my hope upon, the predestination of all things. To me,

brethren, this is strengthening, encouraging, consoling. Is not our God a perfect Sovereign? I view him as such, and rejoice, inasmuch as I know that it is by him, in the day of his power, I, a worthless, helpless, dependent creature, am made willing to acknowledge and receive him as such. For my life I cannot see how brethren who object to the predestination of all things can claim to be standing aloof and separate from the Arminians; for they all believe in a partial, limited, or some sort of predestination. It does appear to me that the declaration found in Colossians i. 16, 17, is enough to settle the matter with those of our brethren who are disposed to set bounds for our God. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." What do brethren mean? Would they have a God that did not possess all power everywhere? Would they have a God that did not work all things after the counsel of his own will? No; but they say they believe God predestinated everything blending with or attending the church; and they acknowledge that much evil attends the church; yet they do not, it appears, see that they are dividing this evil between two parties. It appears that they have God before them, just a little superior to anything else, but not so much so that he cannot be accused; for they say that if God predestinated all things, this includes bad or evil things. But have our brethren forgotten that our God is before all things, and that by him all things consist—things that we can see, and things we cannot see? Have they forgotten that natural things represent spiritual things? We know the things that are not made, by the things that are made. My brethren, I want to know God as just and holy. Though he has predestinated all things, though he is the first cause or source from whence all things originate, yet I must say, and love to say it, that justice is the place or throne of his habitation. I know there are many things in connection with predestination that I cannot find out, that I do not understand, better than to say, It is all of God. This may be ignorance on my part, but I am persuaded to believe that the ruling principle of Herod and of Pharaoh represented the devil; and if so, we see some of the uses which God had for him. For to Pharaoh God said, "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." All is hinged upon predestination. Upon this God's people are saved with an everlasting salvation. Well, are there any that are not his peo-

ple? Yes; and they are doomed to the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, prepared for the devil and his angels. And all this is the work of God, after the counsel of his own will. And how dare any say to him, Why, or what doest thou?

I will leave the subject, as I can see no end to the glory that is in it. I am in receipt of the SIGNS for August first, and it appears to me that this number is full of meat and drink to the hungry and thirsty. It appears to be extra good. Strength is gathered from the first piece, headed, "Evidences of Faith," by A. B. Brees. Write on, my brother. You are one of the strong ones in the house of our God, bearing the infirmities of the weak. Then here is another good witness on the stand, bearing testimony to the things given by inspiration of God, signed, H. S. Cloud. Write on, dear brother; that is, if you want to comfort such as I am; for in reading yours on predestination the tears blinded my eyes, so I had to read it again. And you, dear sisters, in relating the dealings of our heavenly Father with you, were a comfort to me. I have been along there. And there are others yet to be heard from. Let them tell their story through the SIGNS. And you, brethren Beebe, we are persuaded that our God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Unto our Father be glory forever. Amen.

U. J. BELL.

COLEMAN, Tex., Feb. 7, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In looking over some of my father's old papers, I came across the following letter from brother Bacchus, written some twenty years ago; and finding in it so much that is good, I send it to you for publication, hoping it may be as comforting to all the dear brethren and sisters as it has been to me.

In conclusion, I will ask you to please give your views on Ecclesiastes iii. 16, "And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there." Oblige a sister in hope of eternal life,

MARY E. McMAHAN.

OUACHITA COUNTY, Ark., Feb. 12, 1868.

DEAR BROTHER WALKER:—I received your letter of Dec. 15th, 1867, some time since, and think it was certainly more for me to be proud of than my poor letter was for you. Your letter to the church was consoling and strengthening, for we learned from it your steadfastness and soundness in the faith, and that you prefer living alone to marrying or uniting with a Canaanitish woman, and one, too, that has a husband (antichrist), thereby committing spiritual adultery and drunkenness. The brethren and sisters are well pleased with your letter. The ad-

vice is good and reasonable, and I hope we may be enabled to act in accordance therewith. Touching your request of our pastor, desiring his views on the atonement, and if it was made for the world, just like it was for the church, he says that a person who writes such sentiments as your letter to the church contains, must know that it was not; and I think so too. But I am not able to write on a subject of so much magnitude. I can only ask, Is it possible that the atonement was made for the antichrist, just as it was for the children of the kingdom? If so, the tares are as the wheat, and the generation of vipers occupy the same position as does the generation of Christ. If the Scriptures of divine truth are worthy our attention, and contain a true account of God and of his people, his children, his sheep, his beloved, his bride, &c., there is no ground or evidence on which to found the belief that the atonement includes the tares, the vipers, the children of falsehood, the thistles, thorns, briars, brambles, &c. It takes all of this character to make up the full grown beast, or antichrist. These have great power on the earth, even to cause fire to come down in the sight of men. The prophet says that they walk in their own light, by sparks of their own kindling. They are greedy dogs, that can never have enough; always crying, Give, give. These too are they who have reduced "getting religion" to a science, and they are sure to have a drunken frolic whenever they set about teaching this science; for they are neither grave nor sober-minded, as Paul instructed Timothy to teach. I simply mean that in their revival meetings, which they kindle up themselves, they become perfectly excited, drunk, and there is nothing like gravity or sober-mindedness among them. Now Paul says, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife; and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." When Eve was presented to Adam, he said, "She shall be called woman; because she was taken out of man." Then if the figure stands good, was not the church in Christ, as Eve was in Adam? Paul so used the figure, and says, "I speak concerning Christ and the church." Again he says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Now turn your ear to Isaiah, and hear him saying, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise." Furthermore it is recorded, that Christ should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then the children were scattered. Jeremiah says, "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them, from every mountain, and from

every hill, and out of the holes of the rock; for mine eyes are upon all their ways." Then surely God knows who they are, and where they are. Yes, and he knows who to send to bring them back; and when he sends, they are sure to come. Those of the other family may send, but in vain they call. For this reason, "No man can come to me [Jesus], except the Father which hath sent me draw him." But when God sends, "They shall return, even to the Lord." "The ransomed of the Lord shall return," &c. "Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." "They shall return," &c. "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord." "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you."

But, dear brother, I need add no more. One short letter cannot contain the Bible. The atonement then is special, to the believer, the children, the people, the sheep, the bride, the beloved, the chosen generation, &c. It is useless to speak of those who are outside of the family.

Now, brother, I must ask a favor of you. John says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Now I want to know if this is the seed that Paul alluded to when he said, "And to every seed his own body." I have been thinking some about it, and I hope you will give me your thoughts about it as soon as is convenient. "They which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Is this the same seed? The Savior says, "Behold, I and the children which God hath given me. I pray for them; I pray not for the world." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Dear brother, I fear you will find it a hard task to make anything out of these scattering thoughts that will pay you for the trouble of reading; but if so, I will be satisfied with writing them. May God be with you to guard and direct you in the way you should go.

Your unworthy brother,  
A. W. BACCHUS.

MONTGOMERY, Ala., Aug. 22, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose you a letter received from Elder P. J. Powell, tendering words of condolence to me in this my time of bereavement, which were to me like apples of gold in pictures of silver, and which exhibited to my faith the bright silver lining to the dark cloud which at the time seemed to hang over me like a pall; and as it was such a solace to me, I thought probably some other poor child of God in the circulation of our dear family paper might be benefited by its perusal. The words of condolence and Scripture referred to are such as to bring relief, if ap-

plied by the Spirit, to the sorrows, troubles and afflictions which the child of God is heir to here in this time world. It made me, poor me, feel that I, like good old Jacob, could suck honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock. Yes, the doctrine that our God performeth the things appointed for me, is my hope.

Yours in hope,

W. P. BURKS.

PRATT MINES, Ala., Aug. 12, 1888.

DEAR BROTHER BURKS:—I wrote you last Monday in reply to yours of July 27th. Mrs. Herron writes us that you have been bereft of a sister and father in a very short space of time. Myself and wife have suffered the painful loss of our fathers, some sisters, brothers and children, who were all near and dear to us by the ties of nature, and we are fully prepared to sympathize with you in the present multiplied distresses and sorrows. The Lord only has sustained us in all the trials and troubles we have had to pass through. He alone can bind up the broken hearted, and comfort them that are mourning; yet we have found great solace in the words of sympathizing friends. I found great comfort in a few words of your last letter to me. We extend you our heartfelt sympathy, and commend you to God and to the word of his grace, believing that you are taught by the Spirit, and prepared to say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." Where is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world, that can prove that all these things were not appointed for us in our time state here in this world? Can you look back and see any by-path that you could have turned into and surrounded or averted this sore trial? Our joys, our sorrows, our deaths, burials and resurrection, will all come to pass, and our arms will not perform it; and if we would, we cannot disappoint what God has appointed. Job was as wealthy, upright, wise and discreet as any in this age are; yet the thing that he greatly feared came upon him. Poverty, bereavement, affliction and persecution, all awaited him; and all the fear and precaution did not avert it. I believe that God had appointed all these trials and blessings for Job before he formed him of the dust of the earth. Job says, "For he performeth the thing which is appointed for me; and many such things are with him." I must here condense by saying that all the blessings, persecutions, afflictions, imprisonments, perils, poverty and death that the prophets, Jesus Christ, the apostles, and all saints, have and will experience in this world, were foreknown and appointed by him who is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind to any of them. He loved all his people with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness he draws them unto him, and leads them about and instructs them, and keeps them as the apple of his eye. David says, "Precious in the

sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." I have seen your father at Canaan, in Pike County, and heard him offer prayer there, and know that he was held in high esteem by the people of that place; and I am sure you have unmistakable evidence of his high calling from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of Jesus, who was and is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; so that you sorrow not for him as those who have no hope. For him, you and we all believe that Jesus died and rose again. "Even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." This death and burial is essential to the resurrection of the body. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." This will complete the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, and the creature itself will be fully delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. All that are alive and remain upon the earth till that glorious day shall come will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and all will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Amen.

Brother Redd writes me that they buried their babe on August first. We are all in usual health, and trust that you and yours are all well. May the blessing of God attend you, and his arm uphold you, and his grace strengthen you to bear all that is appointed for you in time, and finally save us all, is my great desire.

In hope and fellowship,

P. J. POWELL.

WATERLOO, N. Y., April 15, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—The subject which I wish to write a few thoughts upon is found in John iv. 3-42. The subject is fresh in my mind by hearing a man claiming to be a minister of the gospel use the subject under consideration in his discourse. It seemed that all the good things contained in the subject were left out. In the third and fourth verses of the chapter it reads, "He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria." It is right here that we have a demonstration of his predestinated work. It was not a mere matter of chance that he went through Samaria, but a needs be; just as much as it was needed to have a Judas to betray our Savior, or that Christ should die on the cross to redeem his people from under the curse of a broken law. "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son

Joseph," &c. "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water; Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink." "Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." How true these words, "If thou knewest the gift of God," "thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." How true, when a child of God is brought to that famishing condition, knowing the gift of God, which is eternal life. He is made to ask for a draught of that living water, which shall be in him a well of water, springing into everlasting life. How can a person in a state of nature ask for a drink of that living water? for we know that the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. But when they are made to know the gift of God, and who it is that speaketh to them, then to them the word is, Come ye to the water of life. In this age people will tell you to ask for this water of life and you will receive it and be blessed; but, dear brethren, how can a man ask for a thing he does not have a desire for? If thy son ask thee for a fish, wilt thou give him a serpent? Or if he ask thee for bread, wilt thou give him a stone? "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." How many dear brethren can look back in their experience to the time when, if all the world combined had begged and entreated them to drink of the water of life, they would have said, No; I do not want to know anything of those things. But when Jesus appears and makes himself known to a sinner, then he does not need any human instrumentalities to make him cry, with Peter, "Lord, save, or I perish!" or, with Saul of Tarsus, "Who art thou, Lord?" I do rejoice that we know whom we worship; and if God has a chosen vessel of mercy, though he may be in a city of thousands or in heathen lands, he will in his own way and in his own time (without the aid of human help) make known unto him the gift of God. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Now, dear brethren Beebe, if you see fit to publish this in our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, it is at your disposal. I have been requested by many brethren here, and also in the west (Iowa, my former home), to write for publication in the SIGNS; but if they knew my feelings and my imperfections they would never make such a request. Leaving this to your better judgment, I will willingly submit.

Yours in hope of life eternal,  
WM. J. BLAKE.

GITTINGS, Md., Aug. 16, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am glad you have so kindly and forcibly exhorted brethren to be careful how they act in regard to the proposition of brother Bartley. This, to me, is not entirely new, and my mind has been very much exercised in regard to it and its effects. I saw at once in it an element of discord, and which, if adopted by the different branches of the church of Jesus Christ, would split them into fragments. The works of men, no matter how highly esteemed as brethren, always bring discord; and for men to undertake to establish laws and regulations to govern the church, looks very much as though the Scriptures had become obsolete, so far as the order of the church is concerned. I have heard much about creeds and articles of faith in the churches, and some lay much stress on them, as being important in keeping their members in order. But I am still of the opinion that the rule laid down in the Scriptures is the only safe and sufficient rule by which every church and individual must be governed; and if led by the Spirit, we are willing to be tried and governed thereby. If otherwise, no amount of rules and regulations will be of effect. God has never established a church without the necessary gifts to govern, according to his laws as set forth in the Scriptures. There can be no union or peace without love; and love is of God, and is God. All the creeds or articles of faith gotten up by men have never united in one single instance those that are separate, nor ever can. Love is the fountain of all union and peace; and that love must be manifest, not only in word, but also in deed. If this "basis of union" should be adopted by any of the churches, it will be the means of breaking up the association of the churches, and rather than union and peace will bring discord and strife, not only between associations, but also churches and individuals, involving the whole organized church of God in bitterness and strife. Each church is certainly capable of judging its own members, and those that desire a home with them; and each association is capable of deciding with whom they wish to correspond and receive as messengers among them; and when they come singing that new song which no man can put in their mouths, they will not be rejected or turned away. But if when they come they are told they must conform to certain dogmas of men, there will not be much union or love manifest. The church of Jesus Christ is not kept together by any acts of men, but by the love of God, the word of God; and every living child of God desires to be governed by the King in Zion. So let us have peace in the churches, for Christ's sake.

Yours in hope,

MILTON DANCE.

WALNUT CITY, Iowa, Aug. 5, 1888.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE'S SONS—  
DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find amount due for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for the past and present year. I feel that I could not do without it, as I seldom get to meeting; and, according to my judgment, the SIGNS contains some precious sermons, which strengthen the believing children. Once in a while I see things that cause my heart to be very sad, to hear old soldiers of the cross contending about things that should be no bar of fellowship, but only different views of portions of the Scriptures, and nothing to do with the fundamental principles of the doctrine of the Predestinarian Baptists, in which I am firmly established, according to the teaching of God my Savior. There are many precious brethren and sisters that are just as firm Baptists as I am, who differ with me in some things concerning the teaching of the Scriptures. When I see that we cannot agree, I think it best not to agitate the question, thinking that I may be at fault instead of my brother or sister; and we are commanded not to offend one of these little ones that believe in Jesus. Not that I wish you to understand me to favor compromise with error; but we are admonished to do nothing to cause our brother to offend. Therefore we should be very careful in what manner we admonish our brethren, that it be in the spirit of Christ. I have no objection to conversing with my brethren on different points, so long as it is profitable; but when I see that we cannot agree, I think we should dismiss the subject, that is, this different view of a word. When we meet with brethren, or so-called brethren, who preach unsound doctrine, my admonition is to fight it to the last, and have no compromise with them, nor receive any such into our fellowship.

My brethren and sisters may think me out of place in writing what I have; but it has been on my mind for some time, and I could not dismiss it, as I think I have seen bad results from brethren that differ in some minor points sending it broadcast to the world, instead of private communication. If I know my own heart, I do pray for the prosperity of Zion; not simply in number, but in those that have had their robes washed in the blood of the Lamb, who are the called according to his purpose. As I am past my three score years, it is not likely that my years will be many more here; but I feel to admonish my brethren, especially the younger ones, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free. Strive for peace, contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, and reject that which is not sound doctrine.

I have written these lines with best wishes to all the household of faith; and if what I have written is not according to sound doctrine, receive it not. Brethren Beebe, do

with this as you think best, and all will be well. Our association (Hazel Creek) will be held with the Providence Church, the Lord willing, in Appanoose County, Iowa. The nearest station is Jerome.

PHEBE ELGIN.

CLEAR LAKE, Minn.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR SIR:—Since my mother was laid away on April 26, 1887, I know of no Primitive Baptists within one hundred miles of me, and I get very hungry for the bread of life. Although I am not a member of the church, still I cannot be satisfied with anything less than the doctrine preached by said order. I hear conditional salvation preached here. I hear them say, "Choose the Savior, bow before him now, just now, and let him save you." But that very Savior said to his apostles, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." I cannot see how we as mortals could choose the better part when dead in trespasses and sins, having no knowledge of the better part; and if we did, without a new birth we would have no desire, but rather aversion for the truth or better part. As I cannot agree with this kind of faith, I cannot have fellowship with them, and I thirst for the living water. Then again I am in darkness, and doubt if ever I had a desire at all for anything good. Often I see my own experience in the SIGNS, until they come to the rest God gives, but I cannot go with them there. But the smoking flax he will not quench; the bruised reed he will not break. In such promises as these I find comfort. The great question is, Does the flax smoke? Is the reed bruised?

May God establish me with you all in the true faith, such as Peter had when Christ asked him, "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter said, "Thou art the Christ." And Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee." I remain yours in hope of life eternal,

C. H. BEVIER.

COQUILLE CITY, Ore., July 27, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Please say through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that I desire the address of any of our brethren who may contemplate coming to the Pacific coast to make a future home, that I may send them matter descriptive of the resources of the Coquille Valley, Oregon, hoping thereby to induce enough to settle in this vicinity so that a church may be constituted. I believe it would be a benefit to all concerned, as our climate is very mild and even, soil productive, and crops have always been certain. Being young in the cause, I feel greatly the need of church associations, and some ministering brethren to rightly divide the word of truth.

Yours in hope,

R. D. SANFORD.

CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Tygart's Valley River Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the Leading Creek Church, Randolph Co., W. Va., August 24th, 25th and 26th, 1888, to the churches in our fellowship, and to all lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus.*

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year has passed since our last annual meeting, with its many changes. When we review the past, and remember that many dear brethren have passed from time to eternity, never to return, we are made sad. Some of them we have been familiar with, and have heard them exhort the saints to be steadfast in doctrine and practice. And we know that, according to the course of nature, many of us who yet remain will soon follow them. Dear brethren, as we see that day approaching, let us be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in love, peace and good will toward each other, and adhere to the doctrine of Christ and the apostles. The Primitive Baptists have come up through great tribulation, having been persecuted by all the orders of antichrist that have made their appearance in the world since the days of Christ and his apostles, simply because they would not take part in their idolatry, which was and is the inventions of men, who seek to be honored by men, loving their applause and popularity, and loving to be called Rabbi. We wish to draw the line of distinction between the church of God and all the antichristian world. We should be plain and simple in all our remarks, rightly dividing the word of truth, and at the same time be pleasant in all our expressions. We would not make any other choice while dead in trespasses and sins. We must be made alive spiritually before we can love the doctrine of God's election. Christ must be in us before we can say that salvation is by grace. When we analyze the word election we find that it has a great deal of meaning. All believe to some extent in election. We would elect ourselves to office many times if we had the power to do so. Had we the power, we would elect the men to office that we vote for. In a spiritual sense God has the power to elect whom he pleases. His people were elected from eternity. Then those who oppose this truth, as taught in the Bible, are antichristian. If God's people were elected from eternity, foreknowledge is connected with it. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."—Rom. viii. 29. We find all the antichristian world contending against God's foreknowledge, when there could be no salvation without it. All master mechanics execute a draft before they fell the first tree that is to be used in the building. All the spiritual family or building of God were known to God before

Adam was formed. All the events in time were known to God from eternity; Not a hair falls from our head without him. This certainly embraces foreordination. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."—Acts xv. 18. Are we not a part of his works? We surely are a part of his creation. Had we anything to do in causing our earthly existence? Surely we had not. All that which composes man was created before Adam was made in the form of man. "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it al-together. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth."—Psa. cxxxix. 4-15. We inherit all our nature from Adam. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit."—1 Cor. xv. 45. Here we view two natures. The one is of the earth, and is subject to pain, distress, misery, sin and wickedness, being subject to all the calamities that befall poor, sinful man; while in the other we have great and sublime blessings; peace, joy, goodness, mercy and everlasting life. In the first nature everything is earthly, as we inherit it from our natural parents. A stream cannot rise higher than its fountainhead; so in nature we can rise no higher than our federal head, Adam. So death has passed upon him, and upon all his posterity. So far as nature is concerned, it has no power to raise us out of our deplorable condition. The very last person that will be born into the world will be under the curse and condemnation, subject to all the pain and woe that is inflicted upon man. With all the pride and boast of men they cannot elevate themselves out of the mire into which they are fallen by reason of sin and transgression. "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." This second man is the one

that brought salvation to his people. He is the one "altogether lovely." He speaks of his people, saying to the Father, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." The apostle says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "He that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power." Here we find a people that the second death, or eternal destruction and woe, hath no power over. This people are free from eternal death. They are the favored people, the elect people, that God made choice of. It appears that they were in some way related to Christ before all time, being one and inseparable. Jesus says that they are bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh, and are made manifest in time. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." This declaration destroys the theory of free agency, free will and offered mercy, of which the world boasts so much, and in which they make such rapid strides in deceiving mankind. It is hard to stem the current of delusion in this dark and cloudy day of antichristian heresy. They are presented in so many forms that it is hard for young christians many times to discern the difference between truth and error. Antichrist says that we are all aiming for heaven, but are traveling different roads, some by water, and others by land, while there is a great tide passing through the channel of Sunday Schools, while another company are going through the dark alleys of secret societies. This corresponds with what John in vision saw concerning the beast, saying, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six."—Rev. xiii. 16-18. But Jesus says to his people, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."—Matt. vii. 13, 14. Let us inquire for the old landmarks. There are no new inventions in the church of Christ. It is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one christian experience. Every one must travel the same road in regeneration, before they can love the church and all her ordinances, including the doctrine contained in the Old and the New Testaments. We must esteem others better than ourselves. May we always be found at the feet of our brethren, more ready to hear

than to speak, and not striving about words to no profit. May we bear long with each other, be slow to anger, forgiving each other, even as Christ has forgiven our trespasses. May we continue in prayer, believing in one eternal God.

We have met our brethren in love and fellowship. Our churches are mostly represented, bearing tokens of love, peace and good will to each other. Our correspondence with sister associations is continued, and we still hope to have their correspondence and visits. May the grace of our God still abide with all the churches that keep the ordinances of our God.

Our next association is appointed to be held with the Little Bethel Church, in Barbour County, West Virginia, where we hope to meet your messengers again.

J. S. CORDER, Mod.

J. N. BARTLETT, Clerk.

#### EXTENSION OF TIME.

WE will until further notice receive subscriptions for *new* subscribers at the following rates:

Any one who is a subscriber to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and will send us a new subscriber and three dollars, we will credit them one year on their subscription and send the paper to the new subscriber one year. Or for

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## EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., SEPTEMBER 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH, AND NOT OF WORKS.

"AND as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained unto righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained unto the law of righteousness."—Rom. ix. 29-31.

From an unknown reader we have received a request for our views on the subject embraced in this portion of the inspired record. While it is not our custom to comply with anonymous requests for comments upon scriptural subjects, there is in this inquiry something so apparently earnest and sincere that we are willing, if the Lord will, to give such light as we have for the benefit of the inquirer and of others who may be interested in reading.

It will be observed that the passage quoted is a portion of the conclusive demonstration given by the inspired apostle, clearly defining the entire separation between the legal dispensation, as given by the hand of Moses, and the revelation of that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ.—John i. 17. This truth is deduced not only from the inspired testimony of the Scriptures, but also from the irresistible arguments which the Holy Ghost moved the writer to state so clearly in this immediate connection. Not even by denying the truth of revelation can this principle be subverted, since it is positively proven that it is inseparable from the very existence and perfection of the true God. It would be most manifest presumption for any finite being to attempt to improve upon the inspired argument of Paul in this epistle; hence, it is not with any such design that we have undertaken to comply with this earnest solicitation. Our whole desire is only to call attention to the truth as it is here written. Much perplexity is caused by the crafty arguments of those who pervert the Scriptures, as did the tempter when he tried our Lord in the wilderness, endeavoring to make them seem to sustain the false doctrines of men and devils. If we shall be enabled to expose any of those false ways, it may be of service to honest seekers after truth. This is our most earnest aspiration.

Paul was writing this epistle as the servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, and he did not address it to the world at large, nor yet to the teachers of Judaism; it was expressly limited to such as were "beloved of God, called to be saints."

The great principle which underlies the whole letter from the address to the closing benediction, is the unlimited sovereignty of the love of God, which was revealed in the salvation of sinners by that grace which was manifested in our Lord Jesus Christ. This fundamental truth of the gospel was subversive of all the religious systems which were accepted among men, whether they were of the favored nation of Israel or of the Gentiles. Then as now all natural religion was based upon creature merit; consequently, the doctrine of salvation by grace was resisted by the combined hosts of both Jews and Gentiles. It destroyed all their kingdoms (or systems) alike. The doctrine of sovereign election according to the will of God, uninfluenced by any merit in man, is the characteristic of the gospel. This is the truth which Paul was maintaining in the argument of which this text is a part. To the Jews this was peculiarly offensive, since it overthrew all the claims to superiority over the heathen, which had been their pride from their infant traditions. Reference is made to this claim in the quotations from Hosea and Isaiah in the twenty-fifth to the twenty-eighth verses of the context. Both these passages declare the doctrine of the sovereign choice of God in the display of his grace. Then follows the text submitted by our inquiring friend. The very first expression confesses the whole doctrine of salvation by the grace of God through electing love. Without that predestination which positively and certainly determines facts before they come to pass, there could be no prophetic declaration of those events. Therefore the sovereignty of God is indispensable to the truth of all the predictions and promises of inspiration. By this sovereignty the Lord God declares the end from the beginning; and his word stands firm. On this basis rests the certainty of the whole system of salvation. Without this immutable truth there is no sure support for the hope of any subject of divine grace.

The quotation in our text is from Isaiah i. 9, where the word "Sabaoth" is translated into our word "hosts." Those who accept the truth of revelation are not at liberty to question the application of the text as Paul has used it. The same Spirit of Christ which was in Isaiah when he prophesied, directed Paul in the reference to it. The seed which was left, is certainly the same which was specified in the promise given to Abraham, which is declared to be Christ.—Gal. iii. 16. This accords with the whole doctrine of salvation by grace, in which Christ Jesus is the embodiment of the chosen people of God. Only as they are identified with him are any of the sinful race of Adam embraced in the election of grace. This seed includes every one of that remnant whom the Lord has chosen to salva-

tion. For the development of that seed the sinful and rebellious nation of Israel was preserved throughout all their generations until the coming of the salvation of God which was revealed in the incarnation of our Lord as God manifest in the flesh. For this reason they whose only hope is in Christ Jesus cannot afford to question this essential truth of the absolute determination of all events by the will of the God of all grace. It is not less important that the wickedness of men should be under divine control than that the angels in heaven must be obedient to their Creator. Both saints and angels recognize the righteousness of every appointment of God. Hence the fact that the Lord has left this seed, as stated in the text, is given as the first cause of all the blessings bestowed upon the saints in the unspeakable gift of Christ Jesus as their Savior. No created being can know why God chose any sinner unto salvation. The reason assigned by our Lord for the execution of that choice is recorded for our instruction. Jesus says, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." More than this is not known to the most favored angel in glory. When the pride of carnal reason rebels against this divine perfection of absolute sovereignty, it is warring against the foundation on which is built the only hope of salvation for any sinner. Well does the word of the Lord rebuke our finite murmurings against his decrees, saying, "Be still, and know that I am God." But for this truth the pall of hopeless condemnation and despair would enshroud all the family of Adam. Yet this doctrine is sometimes said to be hard and uncharitable.

The very expression, "left us a seed," includes the confession of the justice of cutting off all those who were so favored. The utter and awful destruction of the cities of the plain is cited as illustrating the condition to which our own merits would have justly consigned us, "except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed." Jude says that those cities "are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." But for this sovereign favor of God we had been as they are. Then well may the recipients of this great grace adore the infinite love which is displayed in giving them the salvation which is revealed in this divine seed; which is all embodied in Christ Jesus. While by this wonderful way of salvation creature boasting is excluded, those who are led by the Spirit of Christ are made to glory alone in his righteousness. They have no power to bring God under obligation to them by any works which they can do.

"What shall we say then?" Having clearly and positively established the fundamental principle upon which the whole gospel system is built, the question is presented by the apostle in this brief expression, which covers and includes all the

cavils and objections which ever have or can arise against the doctrine of God our Savior. The claims of those who relied upon the legal covenant are rejected, and with them are included all theories and systems depending upon conditions to be fulfilled by mortals. If any works of men could be accepted as commending the workers to the favor of God, it is evident that obedience to the law which was given by him to Israel would have been acceptable. But even that law could never give life to those who were under it. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—Gal. iii. 10. Before the law was given on Sinai, death had passed upon all men, for that all had sinned. That is still the condition of all the race of Adam. Nothing which can be done by the condemned sinner can ever deliver him from that condemnation which already rests upon him. This insuperable barrier forever forbids that any works of the sinner should justify him in the sight of the law of infinite holiness. The giving of the law on tables of stone neither justified nor condemned anybody. Of that law it is said, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect."—Heb. x. 1. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."—Gal. iii. 19. That law was indeed holy, and the commandment holy, just and good; but it could not afford relief to sinners who are already carnal, sold under sin. Not even the holy commandment of the law of God could take away the burden of just condemnation under which the whole race of Adam are already fallen. Therefore nothing short of the sovereign grace of the Almighty could bring deliverance to those who were "lawful captives." Where sin abounded grace must much more abound in the salvation of sinners thus hopelessly lost. In this salvation there is no room for creature boasting. It is excluded by the law of faith. All the glory of the salvation of sinners must be ascribed to the infinite grace of that God who works all things after the counsel of his own will.—Eph. i. 11. In the acknowledgment of this precious truth it is impossible to avoid the confession in our text, in which all dependence upon self is renounced, and justification alone by the faith of Jesus Christ is claimed.

The faith which justifies the sinner is not something originating in himself, as is claimed by some who seek to prove the ability of man to merit salvation by the exercise of his own volition. Not only is it expressly

declared to be the gift of God (Eph. ii. 8), but it is also recorded as the fruit of the Spirit.—Gal. v. 22. This is in perfect harmony with the truth that "They that are in the flesh cannot please God."—Rom. viii. 8. Thus the whole matter of saving sinners is exclusively dependent upon the will and work of God alone. It is herein made definitely and absolutely sure that all for whom Jesus died shall be delivered from sin through the grace which is in him. This is the most glorious exhibition of the omnipotence of God which was ever shown to his creatures. While the devices of men never claimed to do more than offer a way for the guilty to escape just punishment, the amazing grace revealed in Jesus makes the sinner just and holy in the righteousness of the perfect Redeemer. The deeds of the law could never atone for one transgression; but the mighty Savior of his people has put away all their sins by the one sacrifice of himself. Thus the Gentiles, who were without hope and without God in the world, are cleansed from all sin by the precious blood of Jesus, while all the devoted labors of the favored nation of Israel could never so much as bring them one moment of freedom from the curse which was continually thundered against them by the law in which they trusted. It is not strange that this doctrine of salvation by grace is accounted foolishness by the self-righteous and unbelieving world. It is so hidden from the wisdom of this world that it can never be seen even by the natural reason of those who have been made by faith to trust in its gracious truth. This is the cause of their perpetual warfare with doubts and unbelief. By faith they know that they are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" but since reason cannot receive the revelation of this truth, their own natural mind is never convinced of it.

The Holy Ghost gives the reason for the failure of Israel to attain to the law of righteousness, after which they followed, as being the result of their stumbling at the stumbling-stone of seeking by works to satisfy the demands of divine justice. So far is this from being a disappointment to our God, it is said to be the very thing which was written in the inspired Scriptures. Carnal pride may murmur against God, as it ever has, saying, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" To this we would return no reply but that which is recorded by inspiration in the same chapter with our text. It is not required of any mortal to defend the justice and perfection of God in any of his works. It is ours simply to accept the truth which he has been graciously pleased to reveal concerning what he has done. This is all essential to the comfort of his saints. To the carping objections of carnal reason it is not our province to ex-

plain the motives of the Almighty. No clearer evidence of enmity against God can be given than the readiness to deny his right to do whatsoever he will with us and with all the creatures which he has made. Let those who hope in his salvation rejoice that he is righteous in all his works, and refrain from such presumption as claiming the right to judge him. It is enough for us to know that he has determined all beings and all events as it seemed good in his sight. He has revealed his love in the wonderful salvation of his people from their sins. No other cause for this is given to us but that it was "For his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins." None but himself can know why any sinner was chosen unto salvation in Christ before the worlds were made. Without the revelation of that truth by the Spirit in the personal experience of every one of the subjects of electing love, none can ever know that he is a subject of that saving grace. Those who have thus been made to hope in the salvation which is in our Lord Jesus Christ, are not led by the Spirit to challenge the right of their gracious Lord to select whom he will as the recipients of his divine favor and redeeming love and mercy. It is easy to understand that our finite minds are not capable of grasping the hidden secrets of the will of God. Let us ever be kept back from such presumptuous sin as calling in question anything which he has declared. When to our view his providential government is dark and mysterious, may we ever say with the psalmist, "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." May restraining grace ever keep us with all his saints from presuming to pass judgment upon the mysterious appointments of divine wisdom and almighty power. Rather may we ever be reconciled to him in all things; so that we may find rest in the sweet assurance that all his works are righteous and are wrought in love and mercy to his people.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

SEPTEMBER 3, 1888.

My correspondents and friends will please address me at Delmar, Sussex County, Delaware, after this date until further notice.

W. W. MEREDITH.

#### THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

WE have received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### PRICE REDUCED.

BROTHER J. B. Hardy, of Wellsford, Kiowa Co., Kan., has authorized us to publish a reduction in the price of the "Five Days Debate." For reduced prices and full particulars see advertisement on last page.

## MARRIAGES.

At Parsonsburg, Md., on Tuesday evening, August 21st, 1888, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Mr. Alison T. Smith and Miss Earick A., daughter of John Tyer, all of the vicinity of Parsonsburg.

## OBITUARY NOTICES.

It is with feelings of sadness and emotions of grief that I undertake to write for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of my dear father, **Brinkly Burks**, which occurred on Wednesday morning, at about five o'clock.

Very suddenly, almost without a struggle, and not a word of notice of anything being the matter with him, he straightened himself out, and the life was gone from his body. He was in usual health up to the time of his death. The first Sunday and Saturday before was the usual meeting time at Union Church. He was there both days, and enjoyed the preaching quite well. It was noticed by some that he was filled with emotion and tears during the services, and seemed to want to bid all farewell after dismissal, as though he thought he should never meet them again at the old church where he had been a member for about fifty-three years, and a Deacon for the most of that time. He had through mercy been blessed with good health nearly all his long life, so that he was able to be at almost every meeting of the church to which he belonged for about fifty-seven years, only having missed three conferences during his long life as a Primitive Baptist. I have heard him often give the reason of his hope, how he was made to feel that his condemnation was just, and how he felt, when he went to the field to plow that day, that he should never return, and how in this extremity of his experience he saw that God was just, and all the world stood guilty before him, and especially himself. When Jesus was revealed to him as his Savior his burthen was gone, his feet were taken out of the mire and clay and placed upon the Rock, Jesus Christ, and his goings established. He tarried not, nor conferred with flesh and blood, but straightway related what the Lord had done for him, and was baptized in Henry County, Georgia, Joel Colley being the officiating minister. He removed from the state of Georgia, in the year 1835, to Pike County, Alabama, and settled in the home where he lived until his death. He was twice married; first to Temperance Evans, January 19th, 1831, who joined the same church about the time father did, and they both put their letters in with Union Church soon after coming to Alabama. Mother died in June, 1873, a good christian woman, who lived a blameless life up to the time she was called to go home. Twelve children were born unto them (five boys and seven girls), four boys and two girls surviving him. Father soon married again, Mrs. Sephrona C. Turner, daughter of old brother Lawrence, of North Carolina, a widow with one child, who survives him. By this marriage five children were born, two boys and three girls, all living. My step-mother is an excellent woman, and was a member of the same church with father at his death, and was a helpmeet indeed to him in his old age. May the Lord reconcile her to this dispensation of his providence.

Father was a messenger to the Conecuh River Primitive Baptist Association when the split took place in the Conecuh River Association, at the time the Missionaries went out of that body and set up for themselves, the Old School or Primitive Baptists holding the records, and still holding its organization. He was one that, along with your highly esteemed father, believed that salvation is of the Lord, and had no fellowship for any of the brood of men-made institutions that were then flooding the Baptist Churches,

and that caused so much division and trouble in the days of the separation. He believed firmly that every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. As a Deacon of the church he was faithful and of christian forbearance, laboring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and in any matter requiring church dealing he was careful that the law was strictly observed as laid down in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew. In regard to the pastor, he was careful that his temporal wants were not neglected, feeling it to be the duty of the church to supply his needs. In his life of fifty-four years at one place he exemplified the reality of the truth of christianity. He lived an upright, honest life, and was correct and just in his dealings with men. His body was laid away at Union Church burying-ground on the 10th instant, where it will remain until the great resurrection morning, when it shall be raised an immortal body, and be received into glory, where ceaseless and undivided praise shall be given to Father, Son and Holy Ghost forever and ever.

ALSO,

**Susan Curtis**, my sister, died on the 30th of July, 1888, after an illness of three weeks. She was also a member of old Union Church, giving bright evidence of her hope in Christ, and spoke beautifully a day or two before her death of the sweet home beyond this sphere of mortality. She passed away peacefully, after bidding all farewell, and thanking those who attended her bedside for their kindness. She leaves a heart-stricken husband to mourn his loss, but he sorrows not as those who have no hope.

ALSO,

My sister, **Temperance Wilson**, died March 31st, 1888, in Gonzales County, Texas, after a lingering illness of some lung trouble. She was a member of old Union Church for a good many years, up to last October, when she went to Texas to meet her husband, who had preceded her to that state a few months. She expressed herself as willing to die, that her hope was in nothing less than Jesus' righteousness, who of God had been made unto her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. She is gone from earth and timely things to that home of the redeemed of God, where he may be praised more perfectly throughout eternity.

W. P. BURKS.

MONTGOMERY, Ala.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In compliance with the request of the afflicted husband, I now forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES a notice of the death of **Mrs. Amanda E. Chick**, of Reisterstown, Md., aged forty-two years, nine months and two days.

During her illness, which was more than a year, her suffering at times was very excruciating, causing the dear family and friends much mental agony; for her disease was valvular disease of the heart and dropsy.

She experienced a hope in Christ in early life, and was baptized in September, 1867, at North Berwick, Maine, by Elder Wm. Quint; and just four years previous her husband, Elder F. A. Chick, was baptized by the same man at the same place. They were married August 7th, 1867, by Elder Hiram Campbell. Since last December the loved one suffered very much of a fearful cough, and much swelling of body and limbs, so that she could not lie down for four months. She sat in a chair for six weeks, night and day. In the spring she was relieved, to all appearance, of the dropsy, and remained more comfortable, and hope was indulged that she might be spared to her husband and family for some time. On the 18th and 19th of last June she rode out, and enjoyed it very much; but on the night of the 19th she became much worse, and the dropsy rapidly returned. After some

weeks it was reduced again, and the dear family thought she would be spared a little longer to them; but the vital powers were so exhausted that on Thursday night, the 16th instant, she sank down into insensibility, from which she did not rally, and on the 19th, at 1:15 o'clock p. m., she passed away.

During her illness the twenty-third Psalm, John xiv. 1-3, parts of the one hundred and third Psalm, and the words concerning the Comforter, in John xv., were often in her mind; for again and again she desired them repeated. She always had a very lowly opinion of herself as a christian, and would frequently say during her illness, "I have not lived the life I hoped to when I was baptized." Her husband would say to her, "We all fail, and our only trust must be in Christ." To which she would respond, "I know it is so." It is seldom that one can be found more entirely unselfish and self-sacrificing than she was. She has left an affectionate husband and five children (daughters), a father, Deacon Nathaniel H. Williams, and three sisters in the state of Maine, and a very large circle of more distant relatives and friends, as well as the church, to mourn their loss.

On Wednesday, the 22d instant, a large number of relatives and friends assembled at the residence of Elder F. A. Chick, in Reisterstown, Md.; and after brief service there, the funeral procession proceeded to Black Rock, a distance of about eight miles. On arriving there one of the largest, if not the largest, congregations ever assembled there upon a funeral occasion was present, showing the marked respect had in the community for Elder Chick's family. The scene was truly very impressive. Hymn No. 651, Beebe's Collection, was read, and a part of the same sung; and by request Psalm ciii. was read. Then the following declarations of Scripture were read as a text, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Although so many persons were present that there was not room for all in the meeting-house, yet they gathered round the doors and stood at the windows, and much attention was given while the clauses of the text were being elaborated. After the sermon, as the vast multitude passed by the "casket" to take the last look at the lifeless remains of the loved one, much emotion was shown; after which the precious remains were laid away in the grave, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

"Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep,  
From which none ever wake to weep!  
A calm and undisturb'd repose,  
Unbroken by the last of foes."

May the doctrine of God our Savior, which brother Chick has been proclaiming for years, be applied to him with power and sweetness in this dark hour of sorrow and affliction now upon him.

WM. J. PURINGTON.

HOPEWELL, N. J., Aug. 28, 1888.

P. S.—Will brother Gold, editor of the *Landmark*, have this notice published in that paper, as Elder Chick has many friends and brethren who read that paper?

W. J. P.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—By the request of his deeply afflicted mother, I send for publication the obituary notice of **David Dudley Woods**, "Little Dot," as he was more familiarly known, whose decease occurred on Sunday morning, August 19th, 1888.

"Little Dot" was born in December, 1872. After his birth it was found that

his bones were of chalky formation, and consequently his little limbs and body never developed in growth as ordinarily. His mind, however, at the age of about five or six years, began to develop, as it were, into the gravity and wisdom of a sage, so that his quick perception and acute sagacity made him the prodigy and marvel of all who knew him. For all these fifteen years and over, as his mind ripened into giant feature, his little body had to be carried on a pillow, and handled with the most tender care by his devoted father and mother and his most faithful nurse Joe (a colored girl), whose love, care and devotion to him were the subject of remark by all who knew the family. "Little Dot" was widely known throughout central Kentucky, especially among the Baptists, and those who have visited the Baptists of Kentucky in the last ten or twelve years. While he conversed intelligently upon almost any topic, there was nothing that seemed to delight or animate him more than the subject of religion, demonstrating beyond a doubt that he was a subject of grace; often putting to silence the ("ignorant and unlearned") opposers of truth by his pertinent and appropriate replies, thus demonstrating that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings the Lord hath ordained strength." I have often witnessed the little fellow so melted down under preaching that his tears would freely flow; and again his eyes sparkling with delight as his musical voice would join in sweet harmony with the saints in singing God's praise. Now while we mourn that his glowing powers of communication and fascinating actions can only live in a sweet memory of him upon whom the chilling hand of death was so gently laid (he died easy), spreading gloom and sorrow over the family circle and many sympathizing friends, what a comfort it is to have the assurance that he now blooms in a holier, happier, healthier clime, in the unmarred likeness of the precious Redeemer, "where there is no more an infant of days nor an old man of years," but where he now fills up his fullness of the measure of the stature of perfection in Christ.

And though death may boast of its devastation,

Thy terror is banished, thy sting is destroyed;

Our Jesus proclaims eternal salvation  
From sin and from death to a heaven enjoyed.

And though sickness and death be here our lot,

It is not so now with dear "Little Dot,"  
For the white-pinioned angel, with hurried flight,

Has borne him away to the realms of light.

May this blessed hope be a comfort to our dear brother and sister Woods in their deep affliction and bereavement; and may the God of all grace and Father of mercies reconcile us to his will, and with reverence to bow humbly to his authority.

On Monday evening, at 2 p. m., I tried to speak words of comfort to the dear family, together with a large concourse of sympathizing friends and neighbors; after which his little baby remains were buried in the cemetery near Keene, in Jessamine County, just in sight of his late home.

With sincere love and sympathy,

J. TAYLOR MOORE.

GEORGETOWN, Ky., Aug. 27, 1888.

"HELP me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy: that they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, Lord, hast done it."—Psalm cix. 26, 27.

**Mrs. Susan P. Parker** died at her residence near Sweet Air, Baltimore County, Maryland, in the sixty-first year of her age.

The subject of this notice was the daughter of Elder Thomas Poteet, pastor

of several churches in the Baltimore Association, and where he closed his ministry. Mrs. Parker was not a member of the same faith and order by public profession, but was a lover of the same doctrine, decided in her views, clear in her experience, and devoted to the cause by a punctual attendance on meeting days at old Harford, living at a considerable distance from any place of meeting. I noticed the growing interest she manifested in the cause, being warm in her feelings toward those she loved for the truth's sake, having the solemn matter of baptism on her mind, and the desire to unite with the Old School Baptists as her people; but a sense of unworthiness of so great a privilege, which is a hindrance to many others, was in her way, together with her rapidly declining health. Nevertheless we discovered in her case unmistakable evidences of divine life and the fruit of the Spirit. She lived to see her family raised in good order, interesting and devoted to her and to one another. She has passed away, being admonished of her departure, and longed and prayed for her full discharge, looking for that blessed hope of the righteous in heaven. Her disease was supposed to be some heart trouble; but be this as it may, the time of her departure had come, which took place on June 9th, 1888. Her remains were followed to the Harford meeting-house, and laid in that resting place, with some remarks on the occasion by the writer. She leaves six children, I believe (four daughters and two sons), all having our confidence, respect and best wishes, together with her numerous connections and friends. May the Lord direct and guard those that are left in the footsteps of the devoted mother, if it be his will.

This family have been bereaved of both their parents. Hardly two months elapsed between the deaths of the father and the mother.

WM. GRAFTON.

FOREST HILL, Harford Co., Md.

DEPARTED this life near Blandinsville, McDonough Co., Ill., July 23, 1888, Mrs. Sally B. Walter, in the 55th year of her age. Sister Walter was a daughter of Vallorius and Harriet Sweasy, was born in Nelson County, Ky., June 7, 1834, and was united in marriage with Mr. William Walter Oct. 19, 1854, who survives her, together with two sons and three daughters. In 1855 they located in Sullivan County, Ind., and about the year 1862 or 1863 she made a profession of her faith in Christ, and united with the Good Hope Church of Primitive Baptists, and was baptized by Elder Wm. Hawkins.

In 1867 the family came to Blandinsville, Illinois, and soon afterward united with Bethany Church by letter, it being many miles away from her residence. I have been personally acquainted with this dear sister about twenty years, and have ever found her the same faithful, uncompromising and zealous defender of the doctrine of Christ as held by our people. She was dearly beloved by her brethren and sisters. Her life and experience have been trying and peculiar, having been in early life connected for about eleven years with a popular sect, and a great hater of the Old School Baptists, but destitute of spiritual life. I have repeatedly heard her say that nothing but the power of God had made her an Old School Baptist, and nothing short of the same power could make her anything else. While surrounded by several of the popular sects, who have begged and teased her to join them, and her own people being at a distance from her, she still remained unmoved and unshaken. She has long been a reader of the SIGNS, though not all the time a subscriber.

Her last illness only lasted a few days, being a spinal and brain affection, which rendered her unconscious as she approached her end. I was sent for six-

teen miles away, to attend on the occasion, but they were compelled to bury her before my arrival. Some brief remarks were made at the house by a clergyman of another order. A dear sister in Christ, a faithful wife and loving mother, has gone from earth. May the Lord comfort and sustain all that mourn.

I. N. VANMETER.  
MACOMB, Ill., July 25, 1888.

Uriah Every was born April 13th, 1809, in the town of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., and experienced a hope in Christ at the age of eighteen years. He was married to Reuanna Sanford, May 2d, 1832. At the age of thirty-two years he moved to Jackson Co., Mich., in the year 1834. In the spring of 1851 he with his family moved to Bridgewater, Washtenaw Co., Mich., where he lived until the time of his death, July 22d, 1888. Two years ago last summer he lost the companion of his youth. He had been a member of the Baptist Church sixty-one years. He often spoke of going home to be with Jesus and the dear ones gone before. He still held to the faith of the Old School Baptists. He left five children, three sons and two daughters.

E. A. EVERY.

I WILL add, in memory of my departed brother, that he was baptized by Elder David Mead, that his life was upright, and his conversation was much of the time upon the things pertaining to the kingdom of our Lord. He seemed to regard as very precious the hope given him in early life, and was always ready to relate it. He seemed at times to very much enjoy the preaching of the gospel, when it was his privilege to listen to it. We had many pleasant seasons together, talking of those things which were pleasant to us, and I can but mourn his absence; yet I feel that it is well with him, and am grateful that the Lord was with him according to his promise,

"E'en down to old age all my people shall prove My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love; And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn, Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

ABBY SWARTOUT.  
WOODSTOCK, Michigan.

DIED—At her residence in Unionville, N. Y., July 26th, 1888, after a painful illness of many months, Mrs. Abbey Jane Jervis, aged fifty-seven years, six months and twenty-four days.

She bore her suffering with much patience and resignation, giving strong evidence of a firm reliance on the mercy and grace of a covenant-keeping God. She was a firm believer in the doctrine advocated by the Primitive Baptists, and in early life received a hope in the mercy of God; but from a sense of unworthiness she had not followed her Master in his holy ordinance of baptism, which she had felt impressed to do in her early experience, and which she so much regretted toward the close of her life. As she drew near the setting of her earthly sun she became reconciled to leave the world and all its vanities, and patiently waited her Master's call. At her request Elder Jenkins preached on her funeral occasion to a large assembly of people with great liberty, from First Corinthians xv. 19, 20.

A FRIEND.

APPOINTMENTS.

ACTON, Texas, Aug. 23, 1888. ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please publish that Elder Wm. R. Welborn, of State Road, N. C., has promised to visit this part of Texas in November. He expects to spend two months in Texas and one month in Louisiana. I will send you the appointments as soon as arranged.

J. A. TANDY.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE 123d annual session of the Kehukee Association is to be held, if the Lord will, with the church at Flatty Creek, Pasquotank Co., N. C., on the first Sunday in October, and the day preceding and following. Visitors from the north should reach Norfolk, Va., by the Bay Boat, on Saturday morning, October 6th, and take the train on the Norfolk & Southern R. R. for Elizabeth City, N. C., where they will be met and conveyed twelve miles to the association. Other visitors are to take the steamer Hamilton, on Friday morning, October 5th, at Hamilton, Williamston, Jamesville or Plymouth, and will be brought back Tuesday on the same steamer. Fare for the round trip, \$1.50.

We would be glad to see a large number of visitors, especially of brethren in the ministry.

S. HASSELL, Mod.  
Jos. D. BIGGS, Clerk.

THE Pilgrims' Rest Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Kansas and Missouri is appointed to meet with Gilead Church, in Miami County, Kansas, on Friday before the second Saturday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Gardner, six miles north of the place of meeting, on Thursday and Friday.

Gardner is about thirty-five miles west of Kansas City, on the Southern Kansas R. R. A cordial invitation is given to all that love the truth.

S. P. RAMEY.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed with the church at Church Creek, Dorchester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

THE Juniata Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, with the Fairview Church, in Fulton County, Penn. A special invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and especially to the ministering brethren of our faith and order, as we are entirely destitute of ministers in the association. Those coming by public conveyance will have to come on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. to Hancock, Md., on Thursday. Be sure and be there by the middle of the day, and cross over the river, and there you will be met by conveyances and taken into the neighborhood of the meeting.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Regular or Old School Baptist Association called Kansas will meet, if the Lord will, on Friday before the last Saturday in September, about five miles northeast of North Topeka, in Shawnee Co., Kan., with the West Union Church, near brother A. D. Jones', and continue three days. Those coming from the east by way of Kansas City will be met at North Topeka depot, on Thursday and Friday. Those coming from the south and west at the same place. Those coming from the northeast by way of Atchison can get off at Kilmer station on the Santa Fe R. R., about two and one-half miles from the meeting, where they will be met and conveyed to the meeting.

A. D. JONES.

THE Lexington Old School Baptist Association will meet, if the Lord will, with the Second Church of Roxbury, Delaware Co., N. Y., on the third Wednesday (19th and 20th) in September, 1888.

A cordial invitation is given to ministers and brethren of our faith and order to attend. Those coming on the Ulster and Delaware R. R. from Kingston will take the afternoon train on Tuesday to Halcottsville, and stop at that place,

where there will be teams to take them to places of entertainment and to the meeting.

JAMES AVERY, Church Clerk.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri will, the Lord willing, meet with the church called Three Forks of Nodaway, at the Union meeting-house, in Page County, Iowa, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Hopkins, ten miles southeast of the place of meeting, on Thursday noon. Also, there will be teams at Morsman, a station four miles west of the place of meeting, on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

THOMAS SHEARER.

THE New Hope Association will convene with the church at Little Bethel, on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1888.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE Yearly Meeting at Indiantown, Powellville, Wicomico County, Md., is appointed and fixed at the usual time, which, the Lord willing, will commence on Wednesday after the first Sunday in October (3d and 4th), 1888, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and those who have a desire to meet with us.

Done by order of the church.

L. A. HALL, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., will hold her Yearly Meeting, if the Lord will, on Wednesday and Thursday after the fourth Sunday in October, 1888, at 10 o'clock a. m. each day, at her house on Schoharie Hill. All who love the truth are cordially invited to be present. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

THERE will (the Lord willing) be a Yearly Meeting held with the Old School Baptist Church of Andes, at Union Grove, Delaware Co., N. Y., on Wednesday and Thursday, October 3d and 4th, 1888, beginning at half-past ten o'clock. Trains will be met at Arkville on Tuesday morning before the meeting. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend, especially ministers of our faith.

By order of the church.

JAMES HUNTLY, Clerk.

A YEARLY Meeting is appointed to be held with the Harford Church, Harford County, Md., commencing on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, at 10 o'clock, continuing two days. A cordial invitation is extended to lovers of the truth; especially ministering brethren. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take the train at North Avenue station, M. C. R. R., for Long Green or Forest Hill, on Friday before, at 4 p. m. Those coming from the north will take the train on the same road to Forest Hill. Conveyances will be on hand.

NATHAN GRAFTON, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa on the second Saturday and Sunday in October, where we hope to meet a goodly number of brethren and friends.

By order of the church.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Clerk.

TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is to be held with the Otego Church, at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., Oct. 17th and 18, 1888. The place of the meeting is about ten

miles east from Binghamton, N. Y., on the line of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company's R. R. The friends will stop at Osborn Hollow, where they will be met and cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth. By order of the church.  
CORBIN SCUDDER, Clerk.

A YEARLY or two days meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Waverly, Tioga Co., N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in October. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends present. They will be met at the depots of the D., L. & W. R. R., L. V. R. R. and N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., on Monday p. m. and Tuesday a. m. The place of meeting is about one mile from the depots.  
D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

**CHURCH HISTORY DEBT OF \$2000.**

**CONTRIBUTIONS DURING AUGUST.**

- MISSOURI—Mrs. Mary B. Dudley 1.  
NORTH CAROLINA—Mrs. Mary Walston 2, A. D. Mizell 1, Elder J. M. Harris 1, Mrs. T. W. Hopkins 50c, W. M. Summers 50c, Mrs. Mollie Evans 1, G. S. Latta 1, P. H. Gower 1, Mrs. P. H. Gower 50c, Mrs. Bettie Wyatt 1, Master Hood 1, Mrs. W. T. Carrington 1, Wm. Jones 1, Elder S. B. Terry 1, Elder D. R. Moore 1, Wm. Farthing 1, Joseph A. Greer 2.  
TEXAS—A. A. McMacon 50c, J. Dalle 50c, Tolbert Griffith 50c.  
VIRGINIA—George Hodnett 50c, H. A. Brumfield 1.  
Total ..... \$ 21 50  
Total previously published ..... 403 25  
Grand total to Sept. 1st ..... \$424 75

**RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.**

- Flemming Wright 2 50, M. M. Killinger 5, J. T. Eason 2.—Total \$9 50.

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Board with Principal, including Lights, Fuel and Washing	50 00

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- Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888.  
Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.  
Spring Session begins Monday, January 21st, 1889.  
Spring Session ends Friday, June 7th, 1889.  
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# Signs of the Times.

D. L. Blackwell 1898

Entered in the Middletown, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Mail Matter.

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 36. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1888.

NO. 19.

## POETRY.

### GREETING.

DEAR kindred in Jesus, I wish to speak  
my mind,  
It is to thank you all, dear friends, for  
your letters in the SIGNS;  
Ofttimes when faint and weary, and feel-  
ing almost dead,  
I have read them and been nourished by  
Christ, the living bread.  
When the gracious dealings of the Lord  
by a tried one are told,  
It lifts my drooping spirits and animates  
my soul.  
Here we see predestination, free grace,  
and dying love;  
These are the precious treasures which  
come down from above.  
Dear brethren, and sisters, too, when'er  
you feel inclined,  
Take pen in hand and write straightway  
for the beloved SIGNS.  
You do not know how many that yet  
have cheered and fed,  
Who've gone their way rejoicing in  
Christ, their living head.  
We may be strangers in the flesh, yet  
near by a new birth;  
By this we love each other, though we  
ne'er may meet on earth.  
I often wish that I could write as you,  
dear kindred, do;  
As you have oft me comforted, I would  
try and comfort you.  
But without the Spirit's guidance there  
would no profit be;  
Ere I can send a message it must first be  
sent to me.  
When you grow faint and weary, and feel  
your need of bread,  
As you have nourished others, may you  
be richly fed.

REBECCA WELLS.

BRANTFORD, Ontario, Canada.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

LOUVALE, Ga., June 12, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS.—DEAR BRETHREN:—It is with a degree of fear and trembling that I again write for the SIGNS, that edifying medium of correspondence, which I receive regularly and read with interest, instruction and comfort. I fear lest what I write may not edify nor instruct like the able and efficient correspondents. I tremble at the word of the Lord, which ofttimes appears to me in its grandeur, and I feel to say, as did Peter, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man." It is written, "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of them that published it." I am here, numbered among them that publish or preach the word. I am made to feel, "It is too high for me; I cannot attain to it." "Who is sufficient for these things?" I should at once desist, were it not that I am upheld. When I can feel that my sufficiency is of God, I can take courage. Je-

sus gives strength to him that is ready to perish. When I can have the evidence that the Lord has given me a word to the weary, that tends to help me up. But God revealed in the majesty of his word makes us tremble before him; and the more we learn of him, the more are we able to say, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." We often are made to feel like Elijah, "They have digged down thine altars, and slain thy prophets; and I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away." We are made to feel that we are "a spectacle to men and angels." We are often reputed as "babblers," and the blind world says, "What will this babbler say?" We are regarded as those who have "come hither to turn this city upside down." Sometimes we are called Beelzebub. I remember once having liberty in trying to preach Jesus and the principles of the gospel, when a certain young man nodded at his sister and a friend to go home. They arose to go; and as I felt that I had made no personal allusions, and had treated them with respect, I thought I would rebuke them as they left; and I remarked, "When the gospel wind blows, the chaff flies." He was angry, and went home and told his father that the devil had preached that day. Some of the boys in the community wanted to make him answer for that. But I told them that he had complimented me. I was in a line of promise. "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call them of his household." We should "rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before Zion." When we feel a deep sense of unworthiness, we go forth trembling, lest we may be deceived, and fearing the word may come to us, "Who hath required this at your hand?" Are we sent of God? and is the work of the Lord manifest in us? "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." I heard a brother not long since use the text, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." I thought of the inheritance, and its unfading and inexhaustible nature. But I thought, Am I certain about that? Am I one, or am I not? is a question of grave interest. If we are, all is

well. If not, we are false witnesses, and shall bring upon ourselves swift destruction. It is a question we cannot settle; but I hope it rests in him who can settle it, and who holds us and the inheritance until the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ, when we shall know as we are known, and enter into the realities and end of our hope, the salvation of our souls, and the unceasing joys and pleasures at God's own right hand. Sometimes I have sweet moments of contemplation and meditation on the great things of God's law; what he has provided at his own right hand for the redeemed. These moments refresh me and prepare me to pass some fiery ordeal. Truly I am made to say,

"Mixtures of joy and sorrow  
I daily do pass through."

We are often made to think of the ravens which fed Elijah in his spell of dejection. Also, of his being sent to the widow of Sarepta, and of his being fed by the angel, and going in the strength of the food forty days. Heavenly food goes the furthest and stays by us longer. This we look for and desire above all. Revelations concerning that covenant ordered in all things and sure, God's eternal election of his people, and the predestination of all things, are the elements of the food which go with us and give us strength for forty days. The SIGNS brings us this food, and we love and cherish it as sent of God, and do not say, "There is death in the pot." But we esteem it the meal which counteracts the death. What I desire to write are words of encouragement to the writers, to write as the Lord may impress them, and it will be a blessing to his children who are scattered all over this continent of America wherever the SIGNS may go. Those who publish the word of our God are a great company; and when I am under the sound of the gospel, I think of the living creatures spoken of in Ezekiel. The solemnity and sublimity is beyond description; whether it drops as the rain, or distills as the dew; or as the small rain upon the tender herb, or the showers upon the grass; or as a hammer that breaks in pieces the rock; or as a fire devouring stubble; or as fuller's soap; or as the sharp, two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; or as a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. We say joyfully, Let

thy word run and be glorified. We look into the sacred pages of holy writ, and there see the great emblems; and further on we see the real matter set forth. Then by faith and revelation we see the great Preacher of righteousness standing in the latter day upon the earth, fulfilling the prophecies in the books of Moses, the Psalms and prophets, concerning him. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, the recovering of the sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Jesus ever was and ever will be the great example of all his servants. He did his work in a manly way, in meekness and in righteousness. He preached the doctrine of heaven, the everlasting covenant, eternal election, and that even hell was prepared for all its subjects. He preached that the seats would not be given to any but for whom they were prepared. He preached the sovereign rule of his Father, and said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." He preached that some were of their father the devil, and his lusts they would do. He also told them that they could not believe, because they were not his sheep. "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me: and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from the voice of a stranger." He gives them eternal life, which forever distinguishes them from the goats, or the children of the wicked one. He preached his Father's discriminating love, the same doctrine which was preached through others. He does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, "What doest thou?" He preached in the face of persecution and opposition. He feared not the face of man, nor heeded the frowns of demons. O what an example for all whom he hath called and given the Spirit to preach his word, to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. Having his promise, and knowing his power, we are held up, and go forth tremblingly to the great work whereunto we are called. I once had a sixty days' tour of appointments, partly advertised. I had such a spell of dejection, and was so downcast, that I was tempted to write that I could not come. But the Lord upheld me, and through patience and

comfort of the Scriptures I had hope, knowing the Lord could thresh a mountain with a worm; that he called not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but he has chosen the weak things of the world, and base things, and things which are not, to bring to naught and confound the mighty. I felt weak, but the arm of God's power being shown me, I was emboldened to go. I also had the prayers of my brethren at home. Sometimes brethren ask me to visit certain sections when I feel unable to go; and I know I will never go to the comfort of the brethren and the glory of God until the Lord lays it on me and leads me forth. Then through much fear and trembling I go forth in his name and strength, desiring his blessing. How beautiful are the feet of them that publish peace, saying, "Thy God reigneth."

Dear brethren, fellow-laborers, ministers of our God, be bold and faithful, exhort and rebuke, preach the word, publish peace. Bless the Lord for this medium of correspondence, through which we can write epistles of love to the household of faith far and near, and express our trials and joys, for the comfort of each other. I say, Bless the Lord for this among the all things he has given us richly to enjoy. There are few of the correspondents of the SIGNS that I have met in the flesh; but I hope we all meet at one throne of grace, and worship one God, and enjoy the communications concerning the deep and holy things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

PANOLA, Ga., Jan. 24, 1868.

DEAR BROTHERS BEEBE:—By permission of dear sister Mattie S. Derr, I send you one of her letters, containing her travels from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of God. Will you please publish it? It is certainly the breathings of a child of God. She is one of the sparkling jewels of the dear Master's crown, and no doubt her letter will touch the hearts of all who may read it.

In sorrow and hope, yours unworthily,

ARMINDA L. DULIN.

TIFFIN, Ohio.

DEAR AND PRECIOUS SISTER:—I have said that in the near future I would try and give you the reason of my hope in Christ; but every day has seemed to bring additional cares, and I have delayed. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. I have thought of you often, and of the promise I made you. I will have to go back to the winter of the year 1868, although in my more youthful days I had serious impressions concerning eternity and death. But to the year alluded to. My dear mother and grandmother,

who were Baptists, and who have preceded us to their eternal home, used to talk a great deal on the subject of religion. I must acknowledge that I did love to hear them talk, though I could not understand that peculiar language of salvation by grace alone; but we will try to solve the mystery. Mother was a great singer, and we children would have her to lead, while we would try to follow her. Methinks I hear her sweet, melodious voice yet, although she has been gone nineteen years. One evening, a few months before she died, while she and grandmother Kagy were talking, she remarked that she hoped all her children would become disciples of Christ; and it was necessary that they should be born again to become such blessed subjects. O, my dear sister, what a deep chill passed through me then. I am not able to describe with my pen the feelings I had in connection with the thought that I must be born again. Yet I did not seem to feel a sense of sin and guilt, nor of condemnation. But the Lord was leading by his own right hand in a way that I knew not. I felt that all I had to do was to be good, do good, keep good, and I should win the prize. I did all that I thought the law required, and felt I surely would obtain the new birth. My mother died soon after that, which was the most terrible stroke that I ever experienced. My father died a little over a year before. I was the only daughter left, with six brothers, to battle with the temptations, cares and toils of life. I felt to murmur against God's providence, that he had caused such a great vacancy in our once happy home, when we as children needed our mother's tender care and love, which only a mother can bestow. But the Lord was leading and guiding us. Our parents had left enough of this world's goods to make us quite comfortable, and with health and strength we could make a good living.

Thus time passed on, while I had the false impression that all was well if I did well; that I could be saved if I did what was right. I had no knowledge that "there is none that doeth good; no, not one;" that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" This was in the year 1868. I struggled along as best I could, and thought all was well if I tried to live up to the example of my parents, who had been very careful about the kind of society their children moved in, especially their only daughter. I had tried to honor and obey them as well as I knew how. I felt that I was not ignorant of their precepts and kindly advice. But as years rolled on I forgot. New things sprang up to my view, and I was given over to temptations and the vanities of life. I partially laid off the old garb of working for my soul's salvation, although at times it was brought to my view, when I would promise

that I would try and get back into the old track of my dear old ancestors, who had fought the good fight and finished their course, having received their crown of righteousness. I thought I must make steps in that way too. Thus I traveled on until the year 1870, when I attended a party in our neighborhood, and was light and happy in my own vain imagination. While I was dancing, I felt as if a voice had spoken to me, saying, "You are a sinner in the sight of a holy and just God." O what agony of mind I felt at that moment. I felt like sinking down out of sight of every one present. What a guilty wretch I felt to be. I could lay no claim to anything good that I had ever done. I felt that God was just in casting me out, for I had sinned against heaven and in his sight. I went home as soon as I could get there, for I felt that every one knew that I was guilty, sinful and wretched; for I was one of the leading ones in the social amusements and allurements of the world. O how I tried to pray and beg for mercy; but it was of no avail. As the poet has expressed it,

"When to the law I trembling fled,  
It poured its curses on my head;  
I no relief could find."

I made many resolutions and promises that I would never again indulge in that which was sinful and wicked. For about eighteen months I felt a great burden of guilt and condemnation, and in no way could I find relief. My prayers seemed to rise no higher than my head, or fell like a stone to the ground. I would think at times that it was only sparks of my own kindling, and that I was only harboring thoughts there was no purpose in; that the Lord was angry with me, and I would surely be cut off; that I was lost, and there was no salvation. Shortly these feelings wore away, and then I concluded that it was all imagination, and they would never return. But, dear sister, I never ceased to think and meditate upon the purposes of Jehovah. I could not help but embrace the doctrine of God's personal, eternal, unconditional election; but to believe that I was embraced in the covenant of promise which was for the Lord's chosen people, was utterly impossible. I felt that I was surely one left alone to wander and be lost. I felt that the Lord took no notice of such a poor, sinful worm as I was. But I struggled and stumbled the more, and at every step seemed to be sinking deeper and deeper into the horrible pit and miry clay. To conceal my feelings, I tried to be cheerful and attended parties, for I did not want to act the part of a hypocrite; yet I felt to be one of the worst sort. I felt that such places were not for me, for I would rather be in some secret closet where no eye could see me but the all-seeing one, the searcher of all hearts; that there I might pour out my humble petition that he would have mercy upon me, a sin-

ner. Thus I wandered along, not knowing what would be the result, nor where the awful scene would end. I was accustomed to catching the bugs and worms that infested the house, and throwing them into the fire, and O how quickly the thought would occur to my already tortured mind, The Lord can just as quickly cast you into the fire that burneth forever and ever. O what fear and trembling! And fear hath torment; but perfect love casteth out fear. I feared death, and also the storms of life, and the awful forebodings which only imagination can portray. But thanks be unto the Lord, I was led safely through the dark and trying scenes of earth, in a way I knew not, and in paths I had not seen, until the year 1876. I was growing weak in body, my strength was giving way, and I knew not where to go nor whither to flee, to escape the vengeance that was due me. In June of that year the Baptists held their association at Kelly's Corners, Michigan, and I felt much like attending, to see if there was one word of comfort for me; for there were times, while listening to preaching, when I could draw a word of consolation from it; but I did not want that dear people to know that I was interested in the meeting. I felt that I could keep it all to myself, and tell them I had a desire to see the state of Michigan. But it was not earth's remotest bounds I was seeking, dear sister, but the city whose builder and maker is God. I was seeking a balm to cure my poor, sin-sick soul. The first night I was there, which was at the house of that dear father in Israel, William Carpenter, there was preaching in the evening, and O how miserable I felt. A burden of sin and guilt was weighing me down, and on retiring for the night I felt so wretched that I thought I should never see the light of another day; that I would be launched into eternity before the sun would rise again. I thought I was deceitful, and was deceiving that dear people. I did not sleep much until after midnight, for I felt that my doom was sealed, and I was sinking down. Suddenly I cried aloud, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." I felt that a great change had taken place, a lifting up, a peaceful mind. But I thought it was only temporary, and that my trouble would return again. There seemed to be a secret praising of God, but no manifestation of his loving-kindness. I thought, Can it be that my trouble is all gone, and I shall never see it again? And I have sought for it, but found it not. The next morning, instead of a sense of banishment from God, I felt to praise and adore him for all his benefits. His people were all lovely to me, and very near and dear. I was drawn to them, and the preaching was so good and sweet to my taste. Yes,

"Jesus all the day long  
Was my joy and my song;  
O that more his salvation might see."

He has loved me, I cried;  
He has suffered and died,  
To redeem a poor sinner like me."

But I was afraid to reveal what I had felt during the meeting, for I fell into a state of gloomy doubts and fears. I did not want any one to know what I had experienced, for I felt to be alone. I could not realize that I had dear friends and companions in tribulation who had traveled the same road and been led in the same way. But to my astonishment, instead of keeping it all to myself, that dear people knew more of what was the matter with me than I did. I often think, dear sister, of the hundred forty and four thousand who had the Father's name written in their foreheads. I used to think, when in great distress of mind, that if I were only included in that happy number I could then have the assurance that all was well with me.

But now another trouble sprang up. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I felt it to be the worst trouble.

"Do I love the Lord or no?  
Am I his, or am I not?"

I attended Baptist meetings a great deal, for there my heart was; for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. It was there my best friends and kindred dwelt. But I felt so unfit to be with them. I tried, O so hard, to get away and be mindful of former things; but the more I tried to shun them, the more I was drawn out in love to them.

"The more I strove against its power,  
I felt my sin and guilt the more;  
Till late I heard my Savior say,  
Come hither, soul, I am the way."

The above lines came to me at one time while riding alone, and I had no recollection of ever having heard them. Also the words, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." I thought, Can it be that these words are spoken to me, that I should obey them? So I wandered and stumbled along for ten months, beaten with many stripes. But I was enabled to put on Christ by baptism, and O what a relief I experienced. What a burden was taken away. I can fully realize the truth of the Savior's words, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls." There is enjoyment only in obeying the commands; for in keeping the commands there is great reward. I have experienced many happy seasons of rejoicing. If they are only for a moment, they exceed all the days and weeks of darkness and gloom, sorrow and distress, which encompass us round. The blessed hope which is as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and entereth into that within the veil, is more to me than the cattle upon a thousand hills, or ten thousand rivers of oil.

Now, dear sister, I have tried to give you a relation of what I hope and trust the Lord has done for me; and I feel to praise the Lord for his goodness and mercy all the days of my life. He has taken me from the

tents of wickedness, placed me in his banqueting house, and his banner over me is love. Excuse me for my long delay.

Yours in hope of eternal life,  
MATTIE S. DERR.

LEONARDSBURG, Ohio, May 24, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:—I feel as though I would like the privilege of addressing you, and the scattered family of our God, hoping it might benefit some of the afflicted and poor ones of our Father's family.

Now, dear children, I must write my own experience, and then you can compare it with yours, that you may know what spirit I am of. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Now go back with me through sixteen years passed, and I will try and tell you something of how I have been led during that time. In the first place, I was led to see myself vile, polluted, sin-defiled throughout, with neither mind nor will to ask anything different than to follow the leadings of my mind, which would go after the things of nature, and led me into sin and folly. I never could be satisfied with any place else. Religious meetings were tiresome to me, especially Old Baptist meetings. The other denominations around were somewhat attractive to me, because they had something connected with them that pleased my nature. But I thought the Old Baptists were actually mean, because they were opposed to the things that pleased me. When I attended other meetings I felt as though I wanted them to preach what they believed was the truth, but let others preach and believe what they had a mind to, as it was their own business.

From some cause an uneasiness came over me, questions would arise in my mind, and I began to feel troubled. I could not enjoy myself in anything I engaged in. Then a lonesome feeling came over me, and a fearfulness that troubled me, which was unaccountably strange, having lived to be twenty-three years old without ever having any such trouble before. I wondered what this could mean. Was I becoming foolish, or was I getting deranged in my mind? I was troubled with the thoughts, Does any one respect me? Ought I expect any one to respect me? What have I ever done to deserve any thing of any one? A poor, disobedient child to my parents, unworthy of their love, who had watched over me in infancy, taken care of me in sickness, provided me clothing and shelter, and did all they could in teaching me to live a moral life. But this was the first time I had really appreciated it. Now did my father and mother appear near and dear to me, their poor, unworthy son. Having joined myself unto my wife, we had an infant son born unto us, and the re-

sponsibility came with all its weight upon my mind. The little fellow was puny and weakly, and what could we do? He could do nothing but cry. Then was my heart first moved by paternal sympathy and love, which only seemed to add fuel to the flame. A poor, helpless mortal I found myself to be. I did not know what to do. Right then and there I first discovered my own ignorance and weakness, being helpless as an infant. Then I had to submit to the ways of providence, expecting to lose my dear child. But it appeared to me that the Almighty had his own purpose in bringing that child into this world, and that he would keep him here until that purpose was accomplished. Thus was I taught the ways of God in his providence with his creatures. But my trouble did not end here. Darkness still prevailed, and the thought came to me, If darkness be in you, how great is that darkness? It seemed to come as a question, and I could not answer it. There seemed to be a searching of the inward parts, even the thoughts and intents of the heart; a wicked heart, wicked thoughts; an inside view of the miserable creature. What could I do? Whither could I flee to escape the vengeance that was due me? In this state of mind I started to go across a piece of woodland lying between where I lived and my father's farm. There was such a weight or burden upon my mind as to affect my physical force. My strength seemed to fail me, and I sat down to rest more than once in that short distance, wondering what could be the matter with me. When I reached home my father was not there, but mother was, and she saw that something was the matter with me. She asked what ailed me. I said, "Mother, I do not know. I never felt so before. I expect I am going to be sick, or something. I do not know what ails me." Then I discovered that I was walking the floor to and fro, and had not realized it. My mother then told me that there was a letter for me there. I took and read it. It was from Elder Clement West, of Illinois, now deceased. I had met him at my father's house, and thought him a queer old man. I also heard him preach a few times. But I wondered why he should write to me, as he knew nothing of me, except that he had met me at home. But by reading his letter I soon found the cause. I had named my little boy Clement West, not expecting that the Elder would ever know anything about it; but the matter was communicated by friends living near me. With his letter he sent his photograph for me to keep for my son, so that he might see the shadow, if not the substance, of the man he was named for; and his prayer was to God that he might become a much better man than the one he was named for. That seemed to do me some good. There was one being in the world

who wished me well. He also had composed some poetry on his name.

"Blessed be the truthful story,  
In Christ we've love and glory,  
Given us ere time began,  
Grace, love, peace, for sinful man."

That appeared to bring some little hope to me, to think that grace was given to sinful man. But alas! it was of short duration. No sooner had I done my errand and started back to the place where I lived, when my trouble increased. What reason had I to hope that grace was for me? Then it seemed that all the scenes of my life were presented to my view, and I acknowledged that

"If my soul were sent to hell,  
God's righteous law approves it well."

But still I kept walking on, my tears increasing, until darkness seemed to be closing in all around me. I turned and looked back to see if I could see any one to help me; but I could see no one. Then there appeared to be a great deep, and at the next step down I would go forever. I cried, "Lord, what shall I do to be saved?" These words followed, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and besides me there is none else." I went on to the place where I was living, feeling solemn, but not burdened as before, wondering what it could mean. After this when I attended meeting the preaching seemed different from what it had been to me. It was now interesting and comforting to me, and was not tiresome, as it had been. I felt a drawing toward that people, and that I would like to be with them whenever they met to worship God. But I felt I was not fit or worthy to unite with them. I attended their meetings frequently, and sometimes attended their covenant meetings on Saturday, in company with my wife. This was in the spring of 1866. In July we attended their meeting, and when the privilege was granted any one to speak to the church, I asked them to turn to hymn 571, Beebe's Collection, which would tell them how I felt. I told them as best I could how I had been led, not expecting to unite with them, but to let them know my feelings. Then the question was asked me if I wanted to unite with the church if they would receive me. I told them it would be a privilege to me to be with them, but I was not worthy so great a privilege as that. They advised me to submit my case to the judgment of the church. I was received by a unanimous vote, and was baptized on the following day, in company with my wife, who had been received at the same time.

Now, dear brethren, I submit this letter to you. Do with it as your better judgment may dictate. If you think it fit to be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, do so; but if not, withhold it, and I will be content.

Yours in christian love and sweet fellowship,

JOHN W. BIGGS, JR.

P. S.—Brethren Beebe, this was

written with the intention of sending it to you; but fearing that it might mislead or deceive some one, I have laid it by until now. But not feeling satisfied, I have tried to write something more satisfactory; but I have failed to do so. If you can have the patience to correct mistakes you may publish it. If this meets your approval, I may write in regard to other exercises. You will see by the dates that there are two at work. The flesh says, No; but the Spirit says, Yes. I will leave it with you, my dear fellow-laborers.

Your little brother, in hope of eternal life,

J. W. B.

APRIL 10, 1888.

TIFFIN, Ohio, Dec. 9, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have in my hands a very dear letter from sister Dulin, and feel that it ought not be hid from others of like precious faith, who will, perhaps, like myself, receive a word of comfort in reading it. Good and instructive letters should be made manifest. It is a very great blessing that we have such a medium of correspondence as the SIGNS. May you continue to wield the sword of truth. This letter is at your disposal.

MATTIE S. DERR.

PANOLA, Ga., Nov. 8, 1887.

PRECIOUS SISTER:—Your good letter was received. It was so good and kind in you to send me your experience of grace. Please accept my affectionate thanks. How my heart went out to you as I read the pages of your letter. How can we keep from shedding tears when we read the travels and deliverances, troubles and sorrows, of our friends and companions in tribulation? For we have all traveled the same road, and are still traveling on together. And O how sweet it is to have company along the tedious journey. Such are the poor in spirit. The Christians' road is a dark and thorny way. Sometimes our feet and our hands are weary, and we feel that the burden is too hard to bear. But God knows best; and thanks be unto his holy name, we are not left alone to cross the troubled sea. The Captain of our salvation is with us, to calm the raging sea. Then let us trust to the Lord, let life bring what it may. He has chosen our pathway. Let things seem good or ill, it is the same dear Jesus leading us. The time will come when we shall be delivered; when we shall cross the sea of death, and land safely at home in sweet and everlasting rest, where our storm-beaten breast will never again sigh, and where dangers and troubles will be known by us no more forever. My sister, how sure is our salvation if we be of the redeemed family. Then let us bear our crosses willingly. James tells us to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations. Under the greatest and sorest affliction we can

sweetly rest in Jesus' love; for we know that the Lord gives us the affliction, come in what form it may, to consume the dross and refine the gold. All my life he has tenderly watched over me; and although I have been led through deep waters and fiery trials, sweet blessings have been freely bestowed. The Savior's love made our hope secure, and safely we can journey on, with his loving smiles to cheer us on our way. Our home is secure. Time, like a stream, is gliding us away. A few more days and we may pass from time to eternity. O that home, how I long to be there, and its beauties to behold. Sister, Christians need not be affrighted when the night of death shall come. He will lead us through the valley and over the river safely home. O what a release, when our sorrows and sufferings will cease, and our weariness be turned into rest. A few more storms shall beat on this mortal shore, and then we shall be where tempests cease and surges swell no more. Let us cheer up as we think of being done with the cares and the trials of this life. Soon our wearisomeness will be turned into rest. In heaven we shall be crowned with the inheritance reserved for all the redeemed. Only a few more doubts and fears, a few more pleading prayers, till our journey will be ended. Then we shall know as we are known, and see as we are seen, and be like the dear Redeemer, among all the ransomed of the Lord, there to praise his holy name in a world without end. Have I indeed a part in this life eternal, an interest in the inheritance that is incorruptible and that fadeth not away? This is the question that often arises. O often I fear it is all a delusion; yet I cannot give up the hope that Jesus does love and care for me, poor and sinful as I am. Sometimes for days, and even months, everything seems shrouded in darkness. It is only now and then the precious promises come to me with the sweetness I desire. How is it with you, dear sister? Do you not sometimes feel cast down, and lonely, and forsaken?

I have not had a letter from our dear and lovely sister, Mary Parker, for several weeks. Poor child, she suffers so much. I am so glad her book is published, and I hope the brethren will give her a liberal patronage, so as to benefit her financially. She deserves much pity and love in her extreme sufferings and loneliness. No one but God knows the trials and heart-sufferings of an orphan. The patience and cheerful resignation she manifests is another bright evidence that she is a child of God. O may you all remember her in your petitions.

I have had the privilege of reading sister Swartout's book, "Life's Journey and Lessons by the Way," and am highly pleased with it. It is full of soothing comfort. How my heart went out to the dear writer as I read its pages. I felt like saying,

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

My sister dear, I have still the reading of our dear paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, which is indeed a sweet pleasure; for I am yet deprived of the privilege of sitting under the gospel sound of the dear Redeemer. What a blessing, my sister, to have this medium of correspondence, so that we can converse with each other, though thousands of miles apart. How pleasant to hold spiritual intercourse with the dear ones of our Father's family. How comforting have been the letters I have received from them, both through the papers and through the medium of the pen. In my troubles and journey of life no sweeter joy has been granted me. Can we not say that our hearts have burned with love as we have talked together by the way? How often I have been cheered by private letters coming from some poor, little, fellow-traveler; and I have thought that those who object to or reject it from any cause, certainly do deprive themselves of a very sweet comfort. O that it may please the Lord to enable each and every one to realize the joy, the beauty and the sweetness there is in the private correspondence of the dear, little children of God. To receive letters from the dear sisters in Christ is truly the most pleasant part of my life. To hold fellowship and communion with them and receive their sweet messages of love, no sweeter joy has been granted me. It is to me a very pleasant duty to relate to them my trials, and to hear them relate theirs; more especially when reading the trials of some poor and afflicted "little one" who has for years and years been lying helpless upon their bed. To all such my heart goes out daily. My dear sister, I feel that I have something to be thankful for. My dear mother, who has so long been sitting beside the cold streams of Babylon, has recently come home to her Father's house, the church, and is now with the people she so long has loved. I had the privilege of seeing her led down into the liquid grave, and to me it was a most solemn and beautiful scene. Surely the meeting was a refreshing season, a time of love and a visitation from on high. My sister dear, we hope you will write again for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We are told in God's word that in olden times they that feared the Lord spake often one to another. As for myself, I feel very incompetent to address any of the little ones of the Most High God. May we all live to the honor of our Master until he shall call us to lay our armor down, to dwell with Christ at home. I fear I am trespassing on your patience. May the dear Lord lead you in quiet paths, and cause you to lie down in the green pastures of his love, in the sincere desire of one who loves you well.

ARMINDA L. DULIN.

P. S.—I did not write this letter for publication, but you can do with it as you see proper; but do not send it merely through kindness. Examine it closely, and if you think it would be accepted you have my permission to send it to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My mother wants me to send your experience of grace to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for publication. Will you grant me the privilege of sending it? Let me hear from you soon.

Your sister in affliction,

A. L. D.

SIDNEY, N. J., July 9, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—My mind has been drawn to write you of what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. I was brought to a sense of my lost and ruined condition as a sinner before God, and was in great trouble, thinking I would sink down into everlasting woe. But I thought I would try to do something good, and thus bring myself into God's favor, and he would save me from everlasting torment, if I did my part. I thought surely I had a work to do; that I must attend meeting, which I occasionally did. Once I heard the minister tell his hearers that they had a work to do; that is, they had their part to perform, and then the Lord would do his part to save them. I then believed that I must pray at least once a day, and that the Lord would hear and answer my prayers. I would repeat some words, and thought the Lord was under obligation to save me. I went on in this way for some time; but the time came when, as I hope, it pleased the Lord to show me my lost and ruined condition as a sinner before him, in a light different from what I had ever before seen. I was made to weep on account of my sins, and made to cry for mercy to God, who will save all who come unto him by Jesus. I was in this way for many months. My mind was drawn to read the Scriptures, and I found that the sinner must be born again, or sink in endless woe. I felt that I was a condemned sinner before God, and that I must be forever banished from his presence. My trouble and burden was so heavy upon me that my dear father noticed it, and asked me to tell him what my trouble was. I believe he thought he knew what my trouble was. But I could not tell him anything about it. He said to me, "You must live in hope, not in despair." I think it would have been a relief to my troubled soul if I could have talked to my dear father; but I did not want any one to know of my troubles in regard to my soul. My father was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church.

I will have to pass over some things of the way, as space will not admit of all. I often heard the "do and live" system preached, but it was no comfort to me. I read how Jesus saved his people from their

sins, but could not see that he had saved me from my sins. Still I was made to feel that I must pray to God for mercy on my soul, while I felt to be too great a sinner to take his holy name upon my sin-polluted lips. The very breathings of my heart were, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." And, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

About this time my health gave way in some measure, and while in my room preparing to retire for the night, I felt the burden of my sins very heavy upon me, and gave up all hope. I laid me down to die, as I thought. But immediately my burden was gone, and for a few moments I wondered how it was that I had not the burden which I had so lately. Then I fell asleep, and slept until morning. When I awoke and arose to dress myself, I wondered how it was that my former trouble did not return, when the Scripture came to me, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John xiv. 2, 3. These words came to me very sweetly, and I thought it was some token of the Savior's love to me, that my sins had been forgiven. But yet I thought I would see greater things, and thought I would wait until I knew more about the matter. The next night, while asleep, it seemed to me that I heard music, which awoke me. I listened, and thought it was in my room. It was the sweetest singing I had ever heard. It comes very sweetly now while writing this. But I kept all this to myself. Shortly after this I had a dream that I thought strangely of, because I did not believe there was any reality in dreams. I dreamed that I was standing beside a stream of water a short distance from our house, and that I was weeping; and while weeping I looked up and saw a cloud over my head, and it seemed to me that I could feel water coming out of the cloud upon me, as it went on toward the south. I looked down before me, and there I saw a beautiful pool of water, clear as crystal, and lying in the water was a lamb as white as snow. It was a beautiful sight to me. I awoke, and found it was only a dream; but it left an impression on my mind which I have not forgotten. I was looking for a great change in myself for the better. I wished to be good. But I thought perhaps the Lord would show me greater things than I had yet seen; and, blessed be his holy name, he showed me that I had no part to perform in the work of his grace, but that he is the author and finisher of our faith.

If ever I have been called by his grace, and received an evidence of the pardon of my sins, I have to go back to the first night above mentioned; when my burden first left

me, never to return again. Jesus bore my sins in his own body on the cross. To him be all the praise. It was some eleven years after this when I was received into the Kingwood Church. I was baptized on the third Sunday in July, 1868. Your dear father, Elder G. Beebe, led me down into the beautiful water, and buried me beneath the yielding wave. I hold him in loving remembrance, although it was the first time I had the pleasure of meeting him. It was a time never to be forgotten by me while I have my memory.

Dear brethren Beebe, if you see fit to publish this in our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, you may do so; and if not, all will be well with the writer.

Your sister in the faith,  
ELIZABETH C. HULSIZER.

WARRENTON, N. C., Aug. 7, 1887.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—If you will allow me to address you by that endearing name, I feel this morning like trying to tell you some of the Lord's dealings with my poor soul. In 1862 I was made to see myself a poor, lost and ruined sinner, when these words came to me with great force, To judgment I must be brought. Without God, without hope in the world, condemned, I stood. There was no eye to pity, no one to plead my cause. Darkness and gloom were upon me. I saw that I was the man that had sinned, and that to judgment I had to come. I would go to some lonely place and try to pray to God, for the sake of Jesus, to have mercy on me. It did seem to me that my prayer could never reach so high as to cause the Savior of sinners to look upon one so sinful as I felt myself to be. My father, who was taking the SIGNS at that time, would often ask me to read it for him; and while reading it I would see where so many had been through my travels, and how they were delivered of their burden of sin, and found Jesus precious to them. There I would be left in my miserable condition. I could not feel the forgiveness of my sins. My sins were so great that they seemed more than I could bear. I lost all hope of ever being any better. I had made many promises that I would do better, but instead of getting better I felt a great deal worse; for I thought that God was going to take me away, and I knew if I died in that state I would be cast down with all the nations that forget God. I stumbled on in this dreadful life, praying for mercy for several years. At last I was summoned to go into that dreadful war, and thought that I would get rid of these feelings; but I could not. On the 20th of September, after the battle at Winchester, Va., I went by myself alone, feeling that it was the last time God would ever permit me to bow under the beautiful heavens. With all my heart and

soul I pleaded for the Lord to save me, if it was his blessed will. I arose, took my Bible, and opened to this portion of Scripture, "My peace I give unto you." The words were applied to my soul in power, which caused my poor soul to rejoice. My burden of sin was gone, and I felt that Jesus had pardoned my sins. I felt happy, and it did seem to me that everything in nature was praising God. I remained in this frame of mind for several days. I did not think that I ever would see any more trouble. But alas! the warfare had just commenced. I felt like I wanted to be baptized and follow the Savior, but felt too unworthy. I could not rest satisfied until I went to the Primitive Baptist Church in Franklin County, this state, and related part of what I have written. I was received into their number, where I have a name yet, unworthy though I be, and feel like I am at home. If I could be as sure of my acceptance with God my Savior as I believe that the Primitive Baptists are the true church of God, I would have no doubts.

Brethren, I believe in the predestination of all things, not a part. I believe that Jesus came to seek and to save those which were given him before the foundation of the world, and the work is finished. The blessed Jesus has died, and rose again, and all that believe on him shall never perish. My dear brethren, I can say I have been often cast down; but thanks be to God's holy name, I am not destroyed. His promise is sure, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." No falling from grace, my brethren. If any fall, it is for the lack of it. It is by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God. No works of this old man can aid in the new birth. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit; that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Jesus said, "No man can come to me except the Father that sent me draw him." So the eternal life and happiness of poor sinners depends on Jesus. If you think there is anything in this that will comfort any child of God, you can give it a place in your paper.

In hope of eternal life through Jesus our Lord,

HENRY W. MARTIN.

COLLEGE GROVE, Feb. 6, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I have been requested by my dear grandmother to write my experience for the SIGNS, if you will bear with me in my weak and imperfect way I will try to comply with her request, hoping the Lord will direct my pen.

I was born July 7th, 1867, and from my earliest recollection I had a great fear of death and eternity. It would throw a very disagreeable feeling on me to think of such things. But these feelings would not last long; for I was young, and of a lively disposition. I would soon drive them

away and go on in sin, enjoying the pleasures of this world. I often thought I would like to be a christian, but would put that off until I was older. I lived on in this way, rolling sin under my tongue as a sweet morsel; and to look back over my past life, I think surely I was the worst sinner that ever lived. I was married August 19th, 1886, to John Markum. He, having the consumption, and thinking he could not live long, would often talk to me about my condition. He said he was in hope that I could tell him I had a hope of meeting him in a better world; but, alas! I had to part with him, never to meet him again on earth, and with no hope of meeting him in heaven. The trouble I was in from the time of his death, which occurred January 16th, 1887, until the 11th of April, no human tongue can tell. I felt like a poor castaway, forsaken by all who knew me. I tried everything in my power to get relief; but my self-righteousness was as filthy rags. I thought my doom was sealed, and I was bound for everlasting punishment. I thought it was just, for I knew I deserved it. On the night of the 10th of April, after I had retired, I tried to pray. I do not know one word I spoke, but I felt like I was sinking down through the bed. Then I thought I saw something let down from heaven by four corners, and some one put a little babe into it, and I saw it as it went up to heaven. Then these words came to my mind, Except you become as a little babe, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. I felt then that I was as dependent as a babe; and immediately (if I am not deceived) the dear Savior was presented to my view, nailed to the cross, and I was made to cry within me, Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless and praise his holy name.

I lived in this happy frame of mind for several days, and then doubts and fears began to arise, and my prayer was, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me! But I have been living in doubts and fears ever since. I have seasons of rejoicing, but they are of short duration. Baptism was then impressed upon my mind. At the regular meeting at Wilson's Creek, on Saturday before the first Sunday in October, after preaching by Elder Woodfin, the door of the church was opened for the reception of members. I, with others, went forward, and tried to tell what the Lord had done for my poor soul. I was received, and with five others was baptized the next morning by our beloved pastor, brother Woodfin. I often fear that I have deceived the dear brethren and sisters; but unworthy as I am, I love to be with them.

Brethren Beebe, do with this as you think best. If you see fit to publish it, please correct mistakes.

Your unworthy sister in hope,  
SUSIE E. MARKUM.

ELDON, Iowa.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having been a constant reader of the SIGNS from its first edition to the present, a lapse of nearly sixty years, its presence still, with the same unflinching and unchanging adherence to sound doctrine, is a solace and comfort to me in the closing of a long life that the Lord has permitted to me, one of his most unworthy creatures. Many times have I witnessed with painful interest the many dissenting views, which often amounted to bickerings, between corresponding brethren in the columns of your beloved paper. As often as one subject would be dismissed, it seemed as if another in controversy would take its place. Our differences of opinion are only the evidences of the weaknesses of finite minds, and should not be permitted to mar the fellowship of those truly humbled by the majestic light from above that shows us that we have passed from death unto life. How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. We have not been given the light to see all the mysteries of godliness, else we would be of one mind upon all things, and wise like unto him above. But it has been given unto his people to bear with each other's infirmities; and those things over which we are so prone to dispute are some of the most dangerous to the welfare of Zion.

What becomes of this poor, sinful flesh after the spirit has gone to its Creator, seems to me of little moment. It is unfit for heaven as it is; and if God proposes to clothe it with immortality when time on earth shall be no more, with all the visible evidences of his omnipotence around us, none can dispute his power to raise, purify and fit these vile bodies for his courts above. Such questions should be handled with more charity than it seems occasionally some are inclined to bestow. There are many on both sides of such theories who have given evidence of regeneration and spiritual discernment, sound on every fundamental doctrine of christianity. Then who would dare set at enmity those for whom our Savior died, and are the called according to his purpose?

I would not have it understood that I believe discussions wrong, but to the contrary; yet while it is a christian duty to try all things by the test of God's word, a feeling of humility, forbearance, love, and a desire that truth prevail, should predominate over everything else.

With the hope that the ever faithful sentinels upon the walls of Zion will guard with vigilance against divisions and discord within, I send you again my annual payment for your beloved medium of interchange of greetings and valuable editorials. Please credit, and I will try and be more prompt hereafter.

Your unworthy sister,

REBECCA FLINT.

## CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Roxbury Old School or Predestinarian Baptist Association, in session with our sister church, First Roxbury, Sept. 5th and 6th, 1888, to the churches in our fellowship, whose messengers we are, sends love in the Lord.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the abounding goodness of our covenant-keeping God we are privileged to send you this our first epistle of love and fellowship; and well may we say with Israel of old, "Had it not been that the Lord was on our side when men rose up against us, they would have quickly swallowed us up." But the Lord has ordained peace for us, so we are called to render thanksgiving to his holy name.

It is not necessary that we should confine ourselves to one particular portion of the word of God in this short epistle to you, the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; but we desire to speak of the common or general salvation of Israel's God to his chosen seed, even to Jacob, whom he loved of old, who was also the lot of his inheritance.—Deut. xxxii. 9. Also, of the everlasting love wherewith he loved his people, and of the necessity of their showing evidence of having tasted this love, and bearing it as a fruit of the Spirit, one with and toward each other.

The term salvation, in relation to the people of God, sets forth his delivering power, in connection with, or from the effect of his everlasting love, as with loving-kindness he draws his people, by sending forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father. For the Son proceeded forth and came out from the Father. Bowing his heavens, he came down. The Word was made flesh, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin; not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. In this he was obedient unto death. Made under the law, he was subject to its curse in his people's stead. The law demands a sacrifice more fitting than the blood of beasts, and an altar more perfect than Jewish altars. So Christ comes once in the end of the world (the final closing up of all the rites under the law) to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; having been made sin for his people, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. As the law of carnal commandments (by which was a knowledge of sin) was given to the nation of Israel only, to whom pertained the adoption and covenant, the law entering that the offense might abound (or show sin exceeding sinful) in the type or figure; so only (as the law of the Lord is perfect) by the writing of this law in the hearts of his people have any or will any of the sons or daughters of the Lord Almighty know him; and as they bear testimony, this is the import thereof, "Ye are my witness-

es, saith the Lord, that I am God." As all the Lord's people shall be taught of him, and great shall their peace be, these are the antitype of national Israel, or the promised seed, who were blessed of God in him. So the one that is Christ's is Abraham's seed, and an heir according to the promise. Also, if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. For the promise to Abraham, that he should be the heir of the world, was not by the law (which was but a shadow of good things to come), but by the righteousness of faith. So all those who are born again (not of blood, nor of the will of man), born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever, receive the assurance by the work and power of God in their hearts that it is by grace they are and must be saved, through faith; and that not of themselves, but is the gift of God. Not of works, lest those who receive it in an experience of grace should boast. For it is given his people to know this here in the flesh, in this world of sin and woe, as men and women, children and adults, the offspring of an apostate Adam, who all bear his image, and who are all condemned in him, by the same power of life and grace in Jesus Christ; for as God walks and dwells in his people, they shall feel his grace and sing to his praise. They all have the one faith, which is the gift of God to his chosen people, and have one Lord, and know no other in their deliverance. They all have one baptism or burial in the cleansing blood of Christ, and in their knowledge of his holy character. When they take his word as the man of their counsel, and are prompted by his love in their hearts to take his yoke on them, the desire for water baptism, in following Jesus, is to show forth their heart's affection to the heavenly Bridegroom; for unto them that believe, he is precious. Also, in showing their fidelity to the heavenly King, they assay to not let sin reign in their mortal bodies, that they should obey it in the lusts thereof; for having been called to liberty, they have no right to use their liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but are daily called upon to crucify the old man (who is corrupt, with his deeds), and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; also, to let their bodies be fit temples for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. All this is but manifesting what the Spirit of God has wrought in the one heart, in the heart of the members of the body of Christ; for the Husbandman, the true Vine, and the branches, are but the fullness of power of him whose word is spirit and life, in connection with his salvation unto his people made manifest.

Then how evident it is that the grace of God which brings salvation teaches men and women, as sinners on the earth, while subject to vani-

ties and death, that this world is not their home, but is a wilderness of woe to them, as the subjects of grace. Here, as the chosen, blood-bought heirs of glory, they have no continuing city, though they are one in Christ Jesus. It is true in regard to them, that there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female. Yet while they dwell in the wilderness of their flesh and sense, they will be subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of the power that subjects them, as the saved of the Lord, in hope. It is evident that the gift of eternal life to the sheep, or God's chosen ones, but fulfills the Scriptures. That joy comes to them. And one in that life and enjoyment was a chosen vessel of God, afore prepared to glory. So it is in hope of eternal life, promised before the world began, that in Christ Jesus all the seed of Abraham wait, and must also continue to wait, and look for the promise of his coming, as the grace of God bringing salvation or deliverance teaches them. It also teaches them to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly and righteously in this present world: as old men and women, young men and women, children, servants and masters; also, Elders and deacons, of a meek and quiet spirit, will but manifest this teaching, obeying those that have the rule over them. Each member will walk as becomes the followers of God, serving the church with a ready mind, and preaching not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and themselves the servants of the church for Jesus' sake. Those that are called to minister in holy things will show themselves ensamples to the flock, ever taking heed to themselves and all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers. All will show forth a desire, by their walk and conversation, to make their calling and election sure, or work out their own salvation with fear and trembling; as the Lord has given them all ability, even as they are all taught of him, and each for him or herself feels that great is their peace.

How great is the contrast. While the religious world (so-called) are endeavoring to work out the salvation of God by co-operating (as they vainly say) with his Spirit, and manifesting their "free moral agency" (as they term it), the Lord's afflicted and poor people know right well that salvation is of the Lord, and of him alone; and also, that their calling is a holy calling, and that the choice of them in him was that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. As they are brought to believe in him and suffer for his sake, they can glory only in his name. Well then could Paul say, He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it (or continue it) until the day of Jesus Christ. He was also sure that nothing could separate the Lord's people from his love in Christ Jesus.

All of them being complete in him, as the members of his body, when feeling the sweet fellowship and bond of love each one must follow him alone, and hate even their own lives, to be his disciples. As they walk in his commandments and obey his precepts, no place is like the Mount Zion, which he loves. They love the church and brotherhood for his sake alone, according as that love is felt in their hearts. And in his dear banqueting house, one with another lifting up holy hands, without doubting the other's interest, all is comeliness; and as the loving presence of the Master is felt, and fear and love pervades every heart, as the blessed Jesus communes with them, what a heavenly place in Christ. Well could the psalmist say, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." In these heavenly places there will be no unlawful coveting, nor withholding one from the other those things that make for the peace of Zion. Such, we may with propriety say, has been our situation the past year; and the Lord has been pleased to bring in some of the harvest, and make his people feel his care and protection over them, and to know that God alone gives the increase, though an Apollos waters and a Paul plants.

May the dear Lord keep us and lead us in that way that becomes our profession, that we may adorn the same by well-ordered lives and a godly conversation as the followers of Jesus Christ.

J. D. HUBBELL, Mod.

EZRA MEAD, Clerk.

*The Redstone Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Maple Creek Church, Washington Co., Penn., August 31st, September 1st and 2d, 1888, to the churches composing the same.*

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—Another year has rolled around, and been numbered with the past, and we are permitted to meet once more, and once more to address you our annual epistle. Your letters and messengers have presented the pure and holy joys of gospel love and fellowship, the glorious principles of everlasting truth. It is indeed a blessing to have a name among this people, and our eyes opened to behold the beauty of this wonderful plan of redemption, and the glory that fills forever the church of the Most High. We are glad to find that you are blessed with the same unabated love for the doctrine of God our Savior. This must ever exist among the churches that our God hath planted. It is true that there have been but few, if any, added to our number; but we must remember that it is upon the little flock that the unspeakable gift of the kingdom is bestowed. The Lord's people have ever been but few, when compared with others. It was said to Israel of old, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor

choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." How small was the army of Gideon, when compared with its enemies; yet how great was the victory given it of the Lord. So, dear brethren, let us not become discouraged at the smallness of our number. It is sad to see those who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts seem to take more interest in worldly things than in the things of the kingdom. We should remember that, no matter how much of this world's goods we may have, or how carefully we may guard them, in a moment they may take wings and fly away. Dear brethren, ever put your trust in the Lord, and he will care for you; for his love is from everlasting unto everlasting. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." His omniscient eye saw the end, and Christ glorified, before time had its beginning, or his chosen church had a natural existence; for he was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Hence the redemption of his people was secure before the breath of life animated Adam's body. All alike, from Abel to the end of time, are saved by grace, and in no other way. It was said to Jacob, "I have redeemed thee: thou art mine." The waters shall not overflow thee; the fire shall not burn thee: for the everlasting arms of the Lord are underneath thee. Christ says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Our Father, who is greater than all, has made us more than conquerors over all these things, through him who has loved us. How sweet the thought that a bond of sovereign grace exists between Christ and his chosen people, which can never be broken. He is their head, and they are his body; and where he is, there they are; and as surely as he lives, they shall live also. Then shout, saints of God; for on Christ, the solid Rock, you stand; and he has bidden you cast aside your fears, and rely upon him for wisdom, power and safety, until the warfare shall end; and then around the throne shall your ransomed souls have everlasting rest.

H. ZINN, Mod.

GEORGE HAZEN, Clerk.

*The Pocatatico Old School Baptist Association, to the churches of which she is composed.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—Another year of our time is numbered with the past, and we have reason to hope that we have been sustained amidst its changes, trials and troubles by him who said, "I will never leave

thee nor forsake thee." The counsel of God is his will, which he purposed in himself relative to his people, and embraces not only the day for deliverance from the power of darkness and the grave, but also he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Like himself, his counsel is unchangeable. He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. As when in the creation of the world, he spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast; so in executing his counsel his word which goeth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he please, and prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it. An apostle tells us that when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater he swear by himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless thee." The Scriptures abound with testimony from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Revelation made to John, that God never has nor ever will be slack concerning his promises. It did not fail in Abraham's case, though it was made manifest under discouraging circumstances. But in due time, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise, in the birth of Isaac. After, in offering him, he saw the day of Christ, and was glad. Neither did the promise fail his posterity or seed of obtaining the promised land; for when the time drew nigh when the promise was to be fulfilled, he sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt. After he had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, forty years, he brought them into the land of promise; and throughout the generation of that dispensation the promise did not fail them. By Malachi he says, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." What then shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution? God's people are subject to these things while in the flesh; but shall they separate? Nay; in all these things they are more than conquerors through him that loved them. Farewell,

W. A. MELTON, Mod.

A. EGGLETON, Clerk.

"THE EDITORIALS."

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

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WE have received from the binder a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, in session with the North Berwick Old School Baptist Church, in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, August 31st, September 1st and 2d, 1888, sends salutation to the associations and churches with which she corresponds.*

BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST JESUS THE LORD:—We have great reason to be thankful to our Lord and Master for this one more privilege of meeting in the capacity of a corresponding meeting, in the love and fellowship of the gospel of Christ; and the desire of our heart is that the eternal God of all grace and mercy may be with us and strengthen the weak knees. It is evident, according to the word of truth, as laid down by the inspired writers, that God is able to and will accomplish all that he has predestinated. We do well to remember that the same wisdom and power that predestinated some of the sons and daughters of Adam unto glory, left others in their own element, in love with sin, and to their own choice, under condemnation. This is in accordance with God's own word by the apostles and prophets. We cannot limit God in predestination. We know nothing about permissive decrees. We as an associate body heartily indorse the doctrine of God's predestination as set forth by the editors of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and also in withdrawing fellowship from those that rail against the truth. Can two walk together except they be agreed?

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm."

Great and wondrous are God's works. Evidently man cannot attain unto them; for if he could, he would be equal with God, and there would be no need of Christ to suffer for the redemption of fallen man. But as man fell, so God had provided a way for the redemption of fallen man by the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ, to the saving of all his chosen people. The apostle Paul has said that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Christ has said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him." Therefore we see that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifyeth himself, even as he is pure." Dear brethren, evidently this love is only in those of the new birth, who have been made alive in Christ. "Herein is love: not that we loved God, but that he

loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." What great love this must be, that comes from the great, eternal Jehovah! "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down: not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." O glorious way to the city of Zion! Evidently the sojourners are mourners in Zion. It is written that the Lord suffered in the way greatly; therefore it is evident that the children of God are to travel in the same way, through trials and temptations. Yes, Christ suffered in all points like as we, yet without sin. "Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me; and I said, O that I had wings like a dove; for then would I fly away and be at rest." How we think at times, being left to self, what great works we could do; but when arrested by the hand of God to see our own unworthiness, we can but cry out, with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." What great joy and consolation there is for the child of promise in reading the word of God. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." How precious it is to a child dead to sin and alive in Christ, when his ears are opened to hear the welcome sound of rest. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." It cannot be the dead that are hungry. How can a child that is dead eat? How can the child that is dead drink from the pure fountain? It is impossible. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." Here boasting is excluded. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 8-10. Here we have it declared that the heirs of promise were ordained in Christ Jesus unto good works before the foundation of the world. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye be-

lieve in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Blessed promise this, which Christ made, to prepare a place for God's chosen sons and daughters; also, that if he prepared a place for them, he would come and receive them to himself. Jesus saith unto Thomas, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Christ says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

"Jesus draws the chosen race  
By his sweet, resistless grace;  
Causing them to hear his call,  
And before his power to fall."

Our meeting was well attended, and the preaching was Christ and him crucified, as the only way given under heaven or among men whereby any can be saved. It seemed like we never had a better one. We still wish to correspond with you.

WM. QUINT, Mod.

LEWIS BUTLER, Clerk.

*The Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the First Church, Roxbury, Sept. 5th and 6th, 1888, to the associations and meetings of our faith and order that feel an interest and fellowship with us, sends christian love and salutation.*

BELOVED BROTHERS:—Through the tender mercy of him that has promised that "As thy days, so thy strength shall be," we have been permitted to meet in the capacity of an association, for the first time since our organization; and we have great reason for gratitude to him who hath preserved us in the love and fellowship of the gospel, and blessed us with some precious meetings during the year that has passed, where his people have been privileged to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, acknowledging him as their King and Ruler, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, to his own glory, and for the good of his people. He has comforted our hearts from time to time by sending those that he has called to stand upon the walls of Zion, to preach for us; and they have come preaching Christ and him crucified, in meekness and love. Some of the churches of our association have been made, to rejoice by the gathering in of those that have been standing without, who have been found in a waste, howling wilderness, led about and instructed, and a new song put in their mouths, even praise to his great name. The churches composing our association are all at peace with each other, looking unto Jesus for wisdom, strength and direction, who is the author and finisher of our faith. We would desire to rest upon the oath and promise of him who has declared the end from the beginning, saying that his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his

pleasure. We would say to the associations and meetings with whom we have been in correspondence formerly, while connected with the Lexington Association, that we still desire your correspondence and fellowship, trusting that we have been taught in the same school, and learned that our dependence is in the same Lord, and our interest in the same Redeemer, with you. We hope our messengers appointed to bear our Minutes to you will be received with that brotherly love and fellowship that flows from no other source but the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Those from your associations who have attended our session, we have been very glad to meet, and have listened to the preaching of the gospel from your ministers with joy and satisfaction to our souls.

The next session of our association is appointed to be held with the church of Andes, Delaware Co., N. Y., where we hope to meet your messengers in love, peace and fellowship.

J. D. HUBBELL, Mod.

EZRA MEAD, Clerk.

*The Redstone Old School Baptist Association, convened with the Maple Creek Church, Washington Co., Penn., August 31st, Sept. 1st and 2d, 1888, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sends greeting in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

WE were made glad by the coming of your messengers, showing through them your fellowship for us, which we desire to reciprocate, and which we highly appreciate, because we believe the same glorious doctrine as set forth by your ministers, who have proclaimed to us the gospel, and not a gospel which is a perversion of the gospel. We are few, and are surrounded by many enemies of truth; and for these reasons, as well as others, we greatly desire the continuance of your christian correspondence. May the God of all grace keep you and us, and all the churches of the saints, from every evil way, is our holy desire and prayer to God. Amen.

Our next association will be held with the Redstone Church, Fayette Co., Pa., to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, at 11 o'clock a. m.

H. ZINN, Mod.

GEORGE HAZEN, Clerk.

*The Pocatalico Primitive Baptist Association, now in session with the Sarah Church, Boone Co., W. Va., sendeth her christian salutation, greeting, to the sister associations with which she corresponds.*

DEAR AND WELL-BELOVED BROTHERS IN CHRIST:—We have enjoyed your correspondence in years gone by, and which has given us great pleasure. We desire a continuance of the same. May the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you and all God's children. Amen.

W. A. MELTON, Mod.

A. EGGLETON, Clerk.

## EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

### WHAT CONSTITUTES A TRUE CHURCH?

IN the confusion and discord which surround the saints in their sojourn in this world of sin and sorrow, they are sometimes perplexed with uncertainty as to the real character of organizations which claim to be churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be an endless task to specify all the different circumstances surrounding the various cases thus presented; and for that reason no general rule can be laid down for determining the line of distinction between such as have lost the character of churches by their disregard of the order of the house of God and such as are still to be recognized as churches, although they may be in gross disorder.

While we would not dare assume the ability to present any test by which to decide this matter, beyond that which is clearly laid down in the volume of inspired Scriptures, it may be well to consider the subject in the light of those decisions which for our learning are written in the law of our King. It is evident that nothing can be done in obedience to the command of our Lord unless he has commanded it. All his commands are written in his revealed word; and therefore everything which has not the seal of that divine authority must be unauthorized. However plausible may be the claims of any theory or practice suggested to the consideration of those who would follow Jesus, it cannot be lawful for them without his direction. All his law is embraced in the injunction which he has given to them who love him, saying, "Follow me." It is evident that no one can follow him in going where he never went. Therefore, the whole duty of the disciples of our Lord is found in the example which Jesus has given to them. In the observance of the law thus enjoined upon them they find rest and peace which can be found in no other course. Thus they prove the truth of the declaration of the psalmist, that in keeping the true and righteous judgments of the Lord there is great reward.—Psa. xix. 7-11. While thus "walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," there is no trouble about their identification as followers of Jesus. But since the establishment of the visibly manifested church at Jerusalem, as attested by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, there has been little of the time when there was nothing to reprove in the conduct of those who

were recognized by divine authority as the members of that heavenly body. Even before the establishment of this perfect kingdom of God, the Lord found frequent occasion to reprove carnality in his chosen disciples. Therefore it is not strange that while the apostles yet were in the flesh they were obliged to rebuke the same error in the churches established under their immediate ministry. It was expressly declared that after they were called from time this tendency to depart from the narrow way of righteousness should be developed to a greater extent. So Paul charged the Elders of the church at Ephesus, saying, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."—Acts xx. 28-31. And again he says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."—1 Tim. iv. 1-3. The "latter times" here foretold have come upon the churches of the saints; and now it is very needful that the rule given by our Lord should be held over the saints by all who would be obedient to the law of the King in Zion. Jesus himself has declared, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John xv. 14. This is the only authorized test by which to determine the character of a church or of an individual professing to be a disciple of Jesus. His law is all comprised in the commandment, "That ye love one another, as I [Jesus] have loved you." This love is not the exercise of mere natural affection; it is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ which dwells exclusively in those who are born of God. It does not require to be forced by a sense of duty; it is the involuntary emotion developed by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, which is the distinguishing characteristic of those who are thus identified as the children of God. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—Rom. viii. 9. While governed by this heavenly principle the saints are in no danger of being seduced into departing from the right way of the Lord. Consequently so long as this blessed fruit of the Spirit di-

rects their conduct they will never cease to be followers of God as dear children; and therefore they will ever practically "be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation," among whom they will shine as lights in the world.—Phil. ii. 15. This is as true of those who are associated in churches as it is of the saints individually. On the other hand, it is equally true of churches as of individual members, that if they live after the flesh they shall die.

There is an important distinction between the assemblies of the saints in their various earthly locations, and in their standing together in Christ as constituting "his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." In the Scriptures the word "church" is used as applicable in both these senses; yet there is a vast difference between the church which as the perfect bride and body of Christ is glorious, "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," and the companies of individual saints, which are designated as churches, in most of which the Lord finds something to reprove. Indeed, it is only as they are kept by the immediate power and grace of God that any church or individual saint can ever be free from condemnation in their own walk and conversation. Hence, they all must rejoice in the same truth which Paul was inspired to record, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." There is no evidence that any man knows anything of the salvation which is in our Lord Jesus, unless he knows himself to be a justly condemned sinner. This is the truth which is continually taught in the experience of all who are instructed by the indwelling Spirit of Christ. Even the old apostle could not say, "Of whom I was chief when I kept the raiment of them who slew the martyr Stephen. It was a present sense of sinfulness in himself which caused the confession, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This abiding feeling of self-condemnation is one peculiar mark which distinguishes all true subjects of divine instruction. Thus, while in the perfect righteousness of their triumphant Redeemer they can rejoice that his blood cleanses them from all sin, they still have to confess with Paul, that "In me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing." As this is true of the saints in their individual cases, it is also true of them collectively as gathered into companies as churches of the followers of Christ. Since the primitive church was organized at Jerusalem we have no authority for believing that any company of believers have ever been able to conduct themselves as a church for a very great length of time, in such a way as to be entirely free from condemnation of having

departed from the law of their King in one way or another. Yet in all ages there has doubtless been an organization of the saints which was justly entitled to be recognized as the true church of Jesus Christ. Certainly this church does not include all who claim the name christians; for some of the most revolting displays of depravity have been exhibited by those who professed to be engaged in propagating the faith of the Prince of peace. The earth has been made to drink the blood of many dear saints, not only by avowed enemies of the doctrine of Christ, but under the persecuting power of professed christians, both Papal and Protestant. It would be blasphemous to charge some horrid carnage upon the followers of our Lord, who forbade the use of carnal weapons even for the defense of his own life. Such societies as could thus disregard the essential principles of the gospel, certainly could not justly be recognized as the church which was established by the authority of our gracious Redeemer. And while those who are called Baptists boast that they have never engaged in such persecution of their opposers, it is not certain that they have always been free from the same spirit, although they have not had the secular power to manifest it by actual bloodshed. Many who could not forsake the doctrine and order of the apostolic church for the traditions of men, have been subjected to bitter persecution by those who were called Baptists. Can such persecutors be acknowledged as the true church of Christ? Judged according to the test given by our Lord they must be rejected. He says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." As their fruits are contrary to the doctrine and spirit of the gospel of Christ, it is evident that they are not followers of him whose kingdom is righteousness and peace.

Neither by their earthly location nor by any natural descent from the apostolic churches can the true character of any organization be established. In those sections where the gospel was first preached the profession of christianity cannot now be found; and those who claim to trace their origin back to the apostles by lineal descent, are found in avowed opposition to the doctrine which was revealed in the inspired testimony of those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It is manifest that such professors cannot be in fellowship with the apostolic church. The true church can be identified only by the peculiarities which marked the followers of Jesus in the pattern given in the New Testament. In doctrine the true church must hold the truth in love. This must be strictly in conformity to the teaching of the inspired apostles, and such doctrine will always be "as the truth is in Jesus." This will be found nowhere else but in that church which is the "pillar and

ground of the truth." Hence, where that people is gathered together in the love of the doctrine of Christ, and maintaining the order established by his authority, that is the visibly organized "church of the living God." It is not enough to establish the claim to be the church of Christ when the articles of faith are consistent with the letter of the truth; for there is frequently a very great difference between the creed professed and the doctrine practically held by those claiming the name of christians. As it is the Spirit that quickeneth, so it is the living principle actuating the members which attests their true character. No profession of soundness in faith can supersede the necessity of the abiding principle of the Spirit of Christ in those who claim the right to be recognized as the true church. All who bear that seal of the Holy Spirit are certainly the children of God; and when such are walking in the Spirit they are followers of God as dear children. The organized church is exclusively composed of such as have this gracious Spirit; yet it has always been the case that among those who are thus called out of the world, (as the name "church" signifies), there have been those who were not really what they claimed to be. On the account of such impostors, "There must be also heresies among you [the saints], that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."—1 Cor. xi. 19. Before the apostles had finished their ministry these heresies and practical departures were found in the churches. Yet they did not at once destroy the standing of those churches in which they appeared. It is not clearly revealed just how far a church may go in error without ceasing to be the church of Christ; but it is abundantly manifest that every church or individual saint must suffer the chastening due to their departures from the right way of the Lord. The Spirit of Christ never leads any one to desire to find by experience the limit of the long-suffering of our gracious Redeemer. Such desires are among the temptations presented by the adversary of the saints, whom they are commanded to resist. In following such sinful suggestions they sow to the flesh, and of the flesh they will certainly reap the corruption thus sown. This is true of churches as of individuals. The love of holiness is the abiding principle which forbids that the saints should be conformed to the sinful desires of their own fleshly minds. The same divine principle prompts the churches of the saints to obedience in every particular and at all times. When led by the Spirit of Christ, his church will always manifest that genuine love which seeks to be perfectly conformed to the precept and example of Jesus. False charity may be willing to sacrifice the doctrine and order which he has authorized for the sake of preserving a deceptive peace with

error; but that love which is the fruit of the Spirit will ever be found ready to endure all things for the maintenance of the truth as revealed in his inspired word. This truth is equally precious in the order of the church as in the doctrine.

While it is not difficult to recognize the fundamental principles of sound doctrine which must be held by every consistent church of Christ, it is in some cases not so clearly apparent just how far the order of the house of God may be violated without forfeiting the character of a true church. As in the case of an individual applicant for the fellowship of the saints every case must be decided by the judgment of the Spirit of Christ in the church before which the case is presented, so every church must of necessity be the tribunal which determines what religious organizations she can recognize as members of the same body of Christ with herself. Any test arbitrarily imposed in such a case must either compel the church to act deceitfully, or engender strife between the church and the party so dictating to her. Where a church is found walking in the doctrine and order of the gospel, and manifesting the Spirit of Christ in the love of the truth, it will not be difficult for that church to find recognition among them who are led by the same Spirit. In such a case no compromise is required, and there is no sacrifice of principle on the part of either church. But when there is a proposition from any organization for a mutual compromise by which the church is to meet concessions from that organization, it will be safe for those who fear the Lord to heed the word which he has spoken in reference to such a case, "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid."—Isa. viii. 12.

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#### MARRIAGES.

On September 20th, 1888, by Elder Benton Jenkins, at the residence of the bride's parents, Otisville, Mr. Albert Manning and Miss Hattie E. Green, both of the town of Mount Hope, N. Y.

In North Berwick, Maine, September 5th, 1888, by Elder William Quint, Mr. George C. Hayes and Miss Olive E. Abbott, both of North Berwick, Maine.

#### OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish the death of my dear mother, **Mrs. Dianna Reed**, whom the dear Lord saw cause to take to himself on the 30th day of August, 1888.

She was born in Fayette County, Ky., November 3d, 1807. Her maiden name was Hoagland, and she had been twice married. Her first marriage was to James Fields, who died two years after their marriage. She married my dear father in 1835, and he was taken from us November 5th, 1874. She was baptized in the fellowship of Elk Lick Church on the third Saturday in August, 1834, by Elder W. Collins. She had been a consistent Old School Baptist for fifty-four years, and I think was a shining light in the church. She believed the doctrine of salvation by the grace of our God, as set forth by Elders Durand, Francis, Chick, Purington, and all who preach the same doctrine. We had our beloved brother, John F. Weaver, to preach the funeral discourse. He spoke beautifully and comfortingly to us from Hebrews ix. 27, 28. Our dear mother leaves four daughters and many friends to mourn their loss, but not as those who have no hope, for we know our loss is her eternal gain. She was known only to be loved by all who knew her. She was anxious to go to her heavenly home, and her whole thought was of her blessed Savior. She told us that when she breathed her last to say, "Blessed be the dear name of Jesus." She had taken the SIGNS OF THE TIMES ever since I can remember, and I have heard her say that she expected to take it as long as she lived; and she did, and indorsed the views of its editors. I feel that if it were not for the help of our dear Lord I could not give her up; for I feel that his everlasting arms are underneath, and will hold me up. I feel that my best earthly adviser is gone, for she always had a comforting word in every emergency. She would say, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord; for he worketh all things for good to them that love his dear name." O let us not grumble, but say, Thy will, O Lord, not ours, be done. The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be his name.

Your unworthy sister, in much sadness,  
M. B. VALLANDINGHAM.

SADIEVILLE, Ky., Sept. 19, 1888.

DIED—At his late residence in Graefenberg, Kentucky, brother **Solomon Bright**. He fell asleep in Jesus on the 21st of April, 1888, aged eighty-two years, two months and six days.

On the 27th of July I tried to preach to a large congregation to his memory the doctrine he espoused more than fifty years ago, and maintained firmly unto the end. It was not my privilege to know much of this aged pilgrim only in his last days; therefore I will adopt the language of his daughter, Mrs. Ellen Crutcher, touching the most prominent incidents of his life, desired to be mentioned in this connection:

"The last year of his life was one of great suffering, more especially from nervous prostration, and on this account he was unable to see with any degree of satisfaction his friends who called upon him; but though his sufferings were very great, he bore up under them all with christian fortitude, and was seldom heard to murmur or complain. He and his dear wife, who died about nine years ago, united themselves with the Old School Baptists about fifty years ago, and were devoted members up to the time of their deaths. He took great delight in reading the Scriptures, having no confidence in the flesh, always relying upon that almighty arm for support both for time and for eternity. He was meek, modest, unassuming, kind, generous, just and honest in his dealings with his fellow-men, an affectionate husband, and an indulgent

and exemplary father. He has left behind him four daughters and two sons, who fervently mourn the loss of one who had few equals and no superiors in goodness. May his pure christian life be an example for his children, and may their last end be as his."

"A precious one from us has gone,  
A voice we loved is stilled;  
A place is vacant in our home  
Which never can be fill'd.

"God in his wisdom has recalled  
The boon his love had given;  
And though the body molds here,  
The soul is safe in heaven."

P. G. LESTER.

DIED—In Wells, Maine, June 26th, 1888, **Mr. Morris Taylor**, aged about seventy years.

He retired to bed as well as usual, and in the night the people heard him fall on the floor, and went to him; but he was unconscious, and died in a very short time.

ALSO,

DIED—In Wells, Maine, July 13th, 1888, sister **Sally Perkins**, wife of brother Alvin Perkins, aged seventy-one years.

I baptized her in the year 1858, and she has ever been a member of the Old School Baptist Church of North Berwick, until God took her to her eternal rest. Sister Perkins was a kind and loving companion, a good mother, and a kind neighbor, so that she will be greatly missed. Her disease was a tumor internally, which caused her to suffer beyond description; but she bore it all patiently. A few days before she died, the last conversation I had with her, she said it was all right, and asked me to pray to God that she might be wholly reconciled and willing to die when the time should come. She had a gentle dismissal from this world of sickness and pain to her eternal home. May God bless her lonely husband, three children, and all that mourn their loss. There was the largest number of people at her funeral that I have seen for years, and it was a solemn meeting.

ALSO,

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, July 26th, 1888, **Mr. Wilson Abbott**, aged sixty-one years.

He was sick some weeks, but his death came suddenly upon us. He was an honest man in all his dealings with men, and all respected him as such, so that he did not leave an enemy behind. He has left a sorrowing wife, who feels her loss greatly, and one son to mourn. His funeral was largely attended.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I now attempt the painful task of recording the death of my dear wife, which took place on the 22d of June last, approaching her seventy-fourth birthday, lacking two months. She had been in poor health through the latter part of the winter and spring, but seemed to be recovering her usual health until five days before she died. She was taken with cholera morbus, which the doctors could not control, and at half-past five o'clock Friday morning she passed away, no more to be troubled with the vanities of time and things which make not for the peace of the soul, but to enjoy the smiles of a crucified Savior, in whom she believed and rejoiced with much confidence and hope, through that faith which was not of herself, but was the gift of God; not of works, but of free and sovereign grace. She had a contempt for all that did not glorify God. We had many pleasant and comforting seasons in communing on these things, when the busy day was past, and the "stilly night" came on; but they are never to be repeated in time. I feel shattered and torn to pieces without that friendly voice to cheer and guide me through the remain-

ing darkness that hovers over us here; but we despair not nor mourn as those who have no hope, for we have this hope as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the veil, whither for us the Forerunner hath entered, even Jesus Christ, who is made unto us all things. I am glad that I have been taught this view of the matter, and have no confidence in the flesh; for I have long since learned that the flesh is deceitful and not to be trusted. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" My hand is too tired to write more at present. When it is well with you, brethren, remember a poor old sinner, saved by grace, if saved at all.

EUSEBIUS BAINBRIDGE.

WINCHESTER, Ky., Aug. 29, 1888.

DIED—At Cammal, Lycoming Co., Pa., March 25th, 1888, our dear sister, **Jennie Campbell**, aged forty-one years and three days.

The subject of this notice was very near to and dearly beloved by the writer, being a sister in the flesh, as well as in that sweeter and stronger tie which unites the dear ones of our Father's kingdom. It was hard to give her up; but the Lord doeth all things right, and blessed be his holy name. Her sufferings were very great the last four weeks of her stay on earth. She suffered from a complication of diseases, but dropsy caused her the most suffering, being unable to lie down at any time. She bore her intense suffering with christian fortitude, with a longing desire to be free from the body of death; yet she waited patiently for her release. O how I miss her, she was such a sweet and loving friend, and always had a word of comfort for those in trouble. But she is gone. No more will we hear her sweet voice nor see her bright smile of welcome.

At the age of sixteen years our sister was brought to see herself a poor, vile sinner; and after many weeks of sore trouble and anguish of soul the dear Lord was pleased to reveal himself to her as her Savior in the forgiveness of her sins. But, like many others of the Lord's dear children, she was left in Babylon for many years; but in wisdom he directs all our steps, and in his own appointed time he led her forth and brought her to his chosen fold. In the year 1879, I believe, she was baptized by Elder S. H. Durand, at Cammal, where she resided at the time of her death. At her request our dear pastor, Elder W. A. Campbell, spoke to the comfort of the mourning friends, from 2 Timothy iv. 7, 8.

"It is not death to die,  
To leave this weary road,  
And with the brotherhood on high  
To be at home with God."

MATILDA WILLIAMS.

DIED—At the residence of S. E. Hatchett, in the town of Alford, Wise County, Texas, at half-past nine o'clock Sunday morning, January 22d, 1888, brother **Alex. Campbell**, after a confinement to his bed for eight days with pneumonia. He was an old veteran of the cross of Jesus Christ, having been a Primitive Baptist minister nearly forty years, and had battled with the toils of this life for over seventy-five years. He was among the first settlers of Searcy Co., Arkansas, where he reared a large family, and then moved to Pope Co., Arkansas. His companion was taken from him four years ago, and since then he has devoted most of his time in scattering seeds of kindness and preaching the gospel when opportunity afforded. Some two months before his death he started to visit relatives and friends in Chicago, Illinois, and Kansas City, Missouri, and went from there to Texas, and while at the latter place the summons came for him to quit his labors on earth and enjoy the bless-

ings of our great Redeemer, and to wear the crown of everlasting life. He, like all good soldiers, was found on duty, and died at his post. A few Sundays before his death, at the close of his sermon, he said, "I am now ready to be offered up. I have fought a good fight, I have about finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." He bore his suffering with great christian fortitude, and quietly passed away as though going to sleep. Truly he is not dead, but sleepeth, to awake in the likeness of our blessed Lord, and put on immortality, and forever bathe in the ocean of bliss.

J. A. CAMPBELL.

**Lola May Poulson**, only child of Lorenzo D. and Eliza Poulson, and granddaughter of the writer, died near New Church, Accomac Co., Va., August 2d, 1888, aged two years, lacking one month and ten days.

Her disease was bilious dysentery. Little Lola was a sweet and intelligent girl, the pet, and almost idol, of her parents and grandparents. She was like a sweet opening flower, full of sweet fragrance. It is one of the mysteries, that the God of wisdom, should lend these precious little jewels just long enough to enlist the strongest ties of affection, and then take them away; but he is God after all. When these earthly cords are broken how trying it is, causing sorrow almost intolerable. In this affliction every weakness in this poor old sinner was tried, as well as all the rest. The shadow of death seemed to fall upon everything around us; but as all our heavenly Master does is done in wisdom, we desire to feel submissive, and look for the opening of his purpose. "Lola May" sounds sweet to us all, because of the one that was called by it. O that we could all feel as did David, when death had finished its work, saying, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

We sympathize greatly with the heart-stricken father and mother, who in early and tender life feel themselves bereft of all they had; for it had mingled with all the sweets of life. But these things must be. May God help us in every time of need.

Yours in the fellowship of suffering,  
T. M. POULSON.  
NEW CHURCH, Accomac Co., Va.

**SISTER Sarah J. Thompson** died May 9th, 1888, of pulmonary consumption, from which she suffered a great deal, but bore it with christian fortitude. We often asked if she was suffering much, and her reply would be, "Yes, but every pain is just and right. I know my God does all things right. I know this tabernacle of clay must fall before I can reach that beautiful shore; but I have all faith in my God." Her greatest fear was that she was too anxious to go home. She said she had nothing to stay for except her son and family, who did all that kind and affectionate children could do for their mother; but as her days were numbered, her heavenly Father called her home.

"Methinks I see her now at rest  
In the bright mansion love ordained;  
Her head reclines on Jesus' breast,  
No more by sin or sorrow pained.

"Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,  
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh?  
When Jesus calls the saints must go;  
'Tis their eternal gain to die."

Our beloved sister was born December 25th, 1830. She has been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for thirty-four years, and always, when able, filled her place in the church, and was ever cheerfully ready to minister to the saints and to those around her. She first married Elder J. Richards, of Grant Co., Indiana, who died a number of years since. In

after years she married Elder Wm. A. Thompson, who died three years ago. May the God of all grace comfort the mourning friends with grace to help in every time of need, is the desire of one of the least.

ANNA M. THOMAS.  
SULLIVAN, Ind.

My dear husband, **Andrew Yerks**, peacefully fell asleep on Monday morning, July 2d, 1888, aged sixty-four years, seven months and seventeen days.

We were married December 22d, 1881, by Elder Benton Jenkins. I was the youngest daughter of Deacon Asa Elston. Four short years passed swiftly away, when he was taken sick, in November, 1885, and Doctors Stauble and Dennis attended him. They pronounced it heart trouble; but with kind attention he was raised to his usual health. In August, 1887, he was stricken down again with the same disease; but with the aid of our family physician and a kind providence he was again raised from a bed of languishing, so that he could ride out, but was at times pressed for breath, and passed many sleepless nights, and suffered greatly. I should not grieve, but it is impossible to stay the falling tear. He had resided on his farm for thirty years, and the work of his hands I see on every side. He was an affectionate husband, an obliging neighbor, and a true friend. He experienced a hope in Christ about twenty years ago, and his seat was seldom vacant in meeting until about two years ago. His funeral was largely attended on July 5th, from his late residence, where so many had enjoyed his kind hospitality. His remains were laid quietly at rest in our beautiful cemetery at Unionville, N. Y., to await the trump of God, when the dead in Christ will rise first, and enter that rest prepared for the people of God.

TRESSA C. YERKS.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you the obituary of sister **Docia Hammond**, who fell asleep in Jesus on December 16th, 1887, aged nearly eighty-six years.

Sister Hammond was the wife of brother Presley Hammond, whose obituary notice appeared in the SIGNS last year. They were devoted members of Beech Creek Church ever since my acquaintance, and their door stood open wide for all their brethren.

Sister Hammond had expressed her wish that I should preach at her funeral, and on the 29th of July, at Mt. Vernon, I tried to comfort the bereaved friends, from First Peter i. 24, 25. Her worth was proved by the number of sympathizing friends present.

Our sister was sound in the faith, not easily carried about with every wind of doctrine, but was steadfast in the old order of things. She took a firm stand against the disturbing element that crept into our churches, and desired to die as she had lived, an old-fashioned Baptist. She was peacefully laid away in the Mt. Vernon Cemetery, by the side of her husband, to await the call of her Lord to come up higher. Among her eight children, her son John deserves special honor for kindness and care in providing for our sisters, S. E. Hammond and Mrs. Waterfill.

JAS. E. NEWKIRK.  
GRAEFENBERG, Ky.

It is my sorrowful duty to record the death of our dear sister, **Euphrosia Jones**. She was born in Montgomery Co., Ga., in the year 1825, and died March 5th, 1888, aged sixty-two years, two months and eleven days. She professed a hope in Christ at an early age, joined the church, and was baptized by Elder Gunn. We believe that God has taken her to himself in heaven. Her disease was cancer of the lower bowels, from which she was a great sufferer for three years. She was a true believer in the doctrine of salva-

tion by grace, and that God chose his people in Christ before the world was made, and declared all things from the beginning. She has been a sister to us, and a mother indeed. She leaves four brothers, three sisters, and a number of friends and relatives, to mourn their loss; but we do not mourn as those who have no hope, for we believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

SALINA KNOX.

**Malinda Friend**, wife of Peter Fortner, was born April 11th, 1826, and died July 22d, 1888, aged sixty-two years, three months and eleven days.

She was married to Peter Fortner on December 16th, 1846. He preceded her to the spirit land in 1864. There were born to them eight children, of whom five remain to mourn the loss of their kind parents. She also leaves eight brothers and sisters, with numerous other friends, for she had many. She united with the Old School Baptists on June 4th, 1868, and was enabled by God to live a christian and upright life until death. The church has lost one of her faithful members, for she was always found in her seat on meeting days; but we hope our loss is her eternal gain. The congregation that met to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed was large, and the writer addressed them from First Corinthians xv. 36.

R. W. PETERS.

DIED—April 19th, 1888, at Worthington, Nobles Co., Minn., my beloved daughter, **Miss Clara M. James**, daughter of H. and E. James, aged sixteen years, one month and seventeen days. Her disease was lung fever. She was sick only two weeks, suffering a great deal, but bearing it patiently, and never complained once. She loved to read the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and called for it an hour before she died. "He was willing to go. Her last words were, 'Don't cry for me.' She has left her parents, three sisters and two brothers to mourn their loss; but our loss is her gain.

"Dearest Clara, thou hast left us,  
And our loss we deeply feel;  
But 'tis God that has bereft us,  
He can all our sorrows heal."

Your unworthy brother,  
HENRY JAMES.

### ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE 123d annual session of the Kehukee Association is to be held, if the Lord will, with the church at Flatty Creek, Pasquotank Co., N. C., on the first Sunday in October, and the day preceding and following. Visitors from the north should reach Norfolk, Va., by the Bay Boat, on Saturday morning, October 6th, and take the train on the Norfolk & Southern R. R. for Elizabeth City, N. C., where they will be met and conveyed twelve miles to the association. Other visitors are to take the steamer Hamilton, on Friday morning, October 5th, at Hamilton, Williamston, Jamesville or Plymouth, and will be brought back Tuesday on the same steamer. Fare for the round trip, \$1.50.

We would be glad to see a large number of visitors, especially of brethren in the ministry.

S. HASSELL, Mod.  
Jos. D. Biggs, Clerk.

THE Pilgrims' Rest Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Kansas and Missouri is appointed to meet with Gilead Church, in Miami County, Kansas, on Friday before the second Saturday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Gardner, six miles north of the place of meeting, on Thursday and Friday.

Gardner is about thirty-five miles west of Kansas City, on the Southern Kansas

R. R. A cordial invitation is given to all that love the truth.

S. P. RAMEY.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed with the church at Church Creek, Dorchester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Brethren and friends coming by the cars will leave Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, on Tuesday, at 7:27 a. m., and change cars at Seaford for Cambridge. All coming from Salisbury or other stations will also change cars at Seaford. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take the steamer for Woolford, on Tuesday morning.

We are looking with pleasure to the time when we shall welcome our dear kindred in Christ and our friends.

SUSIE L. WOOLFORD.

THE Juniata Association will convene, the Lord willing, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, with the Fairview Church, in Fulton County, Penn. A special invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and especially to the ministering brethren of our faith and order, as we are entirely destitute of ministers in the association. Those coming by public conveyance will have to come on the Baltimore & Ohio R. R. to Hancock, Md., on Thursday. Be sure and be there by the middle of the day, and cross over the river, and there you will be met by conveyances and taken into the neighborhood of the meeting.

AHIMAAZ MELLOTT.

THE Western Corresponding Association of the Old School Predestinarian Baptists of Missouri will, the Lord willing, meet with the church called Three Forks of Nodaway, at the Union meeting-house, in Page County, Iowa, on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Those coming by rail will be met at Hopkins, ten miles southeast of the place of meeting, on Thursday noon. Also, there will be teams at Morsman, a station four miles west of the place of meeting, on Thursday. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

THOMAS SHEARER.

THE New Hope Association will convene with the church at Little Bethel, on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1888.

### YEARLY MEETINGS.

Our Yearly Meeting is appointed to be held at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., to begin on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1888, at 2 o'clock p. m.

Those coming through and from Philadelphia will take the B. & O. R. R. at Twenty-Fourth and Chestnut Streets, on Saturday, at 10 o'clock, for Landinburg. Six of the number can get off at Hockessin and go with brother Dennison; the balance to Landinburg. Those coming through and from Baltimore can take either the P. W. & R. R. R. or the B. & O. R. R., so as to get to Newark by 12 o'clock on Saturday. Those coming up the Delaware R. R. will ticket to Wilson, on Delaware City R. R., and come to my house. Come and see us.

JOS. L. STATON.

THE Yearly Meeting at Indiantown, Powellville, Wicomico County, Md., is appointed and fixed at the usual time, which, the Lord willing, will commence on Wednesday after the first Sunday in October (10th and 11th), 1888, and continue two days. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth, and those who have a desire to meet with us.

Done by order of the church.

L. A. HALL, Clerk.

THE Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., will hold her Yearly Meeting, if the Lord will, on Wednesday and Thursday after the fourth Sunday in October, 1888, at 10 o'clock a. m. each day, at her house on Schoharie Hill. All who love the truth are cordially invited to be present. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

A YEARLY meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church of Gilboa on the second Saturday and Sunday in October, where we hope to meet a goodly number of brethren and friends.

By order of the church.

D. S. ELLIOTT, Clerk.

**TWO DAYS MEETINGS.**

A two days meeting is to be held with the Otego Church, at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., Oct. 17th and 18, 1888. The place of the meeting is about ten miles east from Binghamton, N. Y., on the line of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company's R. R. The friends will stop at Osborn Hollow, where they will be met and cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

By order of the church.

CORBIN SCUDDER, Clerk.

A YEARLY or two days meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Waverly, Tioga Co., N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in October. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends present. They will be met at the the depots of the D., L. & W. R. R., L. V. R. R. and N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., on Monday p. m. and Tuesday a. m. The place of meeting is about one mile from the depots.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

**RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.**

George Awman 2, J. M. Blackshear 2 50, Elder E. W. Walker 2 50, W. Lively 13 50, Wm. Slade 18, Elder P. G. Lester 2 50, Elder M. Henyon 2, Jabez Beard 2 50, Elder Wootson Melton 2 50, B. E. Bourland 2, Miss Sallie Garner 2, Ruben McWilliams 2, E. B. Simmons 2 50, W. S. Cox 2, Wm. P. Tolley 2, A. H. Parkes 2 50.—Total \$63 00.

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ALMA F. McNAGHTEN, PLEASANTVILLE, Fairfield Co., Ohio.

**Williamston Academy.**

The Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888, and continues twenty weeks. The Academy is situated in a grove of large oaks, and has a well of excellent water. The location is about a mile from Roanoke River, and ninety feet above its level.

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D. L. Blackwell 1878

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1888.

NO. 20.

## POETRY

### WEARINESS.

CAN poor words express that feeling,  
The homesick longing of the mind,  
Which, weary of itself and sin,  
A place of peace and rest would find?  
Like the Savior, in whose footsteps  
Our wandering feet profess to tread.  
We find upon this sinful earth  
No place to rest our weary head.  
No rest on earth, however much  
We seek it as we onward go;  
Whene'er we stop to taste its joys,  
Some sorrow brings our spirits low.  
Yet often as we backward glance,  
And trace the path by which we came,  
Upward to God our voice we raise,  
In thankful praises to his name.  
Praises for all the sorrows past,  
Since they have given us cause to know  
The strength of that dear Father's arm,  
Supporting us in times of woe.  
Through all we know that future days  
Can bring no grief unknown to thee,  
Nor shall the sweet old promise fail,  
That, as our day, our strength shall be.  
Still, still we long to rest with thee,  
As prisoners long to break the chain,  
Which binds them to the prison house,  
And breathe the sweet, fresh air again.  
As children far away from home  
Grow homesick for their mother's face,  
So, Father, yearns our soul for thee:  
We long to rest in thy embrace.  
Grant that each may with patience wait  
Until the time when thou shalt say,  
Come, child, the warfare ended is,  
For sorrow's night has passed away.  
Then O how gladly, O how gladly,  
We will leave this earthly shore,  
Set free from earth, and sin, and sorrow,  
To dwell with thee forevermore.

H.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW CASTLE, Del., Aug. 12, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been a reader and a subscriber to your paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, for sixteen years, and during that time I have often felt impressed to try to communicate to the household of faith who read its columns, something of the enjoyment, comfort and instructions I have received in perusing its pages; yet I have as often refrained from doing so, on account of my utter inability, I fear, to write anything that would be to their profit, and to the praise of God, whom I sometimes hope I love and desire to serve. Time and again have I read communications written by some of the dear brethren or sisters, and my heart would go out to them in love and fellowship for the message they had delivered to me, the least of my Father's house. What a privilege and a blessing we have in such a medium of correspondence, through which many of us, when in darkness and afflicted,

tossed with tempest and not comforted, receive words of encouragement. Many times when hungering for the living bread, the bread of which if a man eat he shall never die, in due season the dear Lord through this medium moves some dear brother or sister to write on some portion of holy writ, or speak of what the Lord has done for their soul, in bringing them out of darkness into light, and enabling them to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Then do we feel to take courage and thank God for this manifestation of his goodness unto us, in making us vessels of mercy and of honor. We also feel to thank God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, that he has from the beginning, from before the foundation of the world, ordained, appointed, purposed and predestinated such a medium of correspondence, through which many can correspond, who are so isolated that they have not the privilege of meeting with the church and hearing God's ministering servants preach the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; those who shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, and to speak often one to another. This is the best way that many of God's poor saints have of speaking one to another; for in this way a multitude is fed, comforted, built up and established in the faith of God. How many there are of the Lord's poor who have become more established in the faith of God's predestination of all things by having access to this precious family paper during the past year. There are brethren to whom I feel much drawn for the fearless, bold and able manner in which they have defended this precious truth. To me it is precious because it assures me that all things are of God, and under his control and direction, and that "without him was not anything made that was made." I have of late had some very pleasant thoughts upon this subject, as taught by him who teaches as never man taught; but realizing so sensibly my insufficiency to do justice to this important subject, it is with much fear and trembling that I attempt to suggest it. But knowing that it contains so much, I venture, feeling that those who have the spirit of forgiveness will forgive what is amiss.

Christ in his sermon on the mount, in speaking to the disciples, instructs them plainly how they should do, and how they should not do. He

says, "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly." There is so much which is opened up to me that, like the psalmist, I have to say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Does not this teach us something more than giving alms literally? Is there not a spiritual application to be made of it? Does it not teach us that the disciples of Jesus are not to boast, as do the Pharisees and hypocrites, that they are doing much good to save souls, by devoting their time and much of their possessions, and claim that they shall receive a great reward?

There was a man "whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple, who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." God's people often, when they are complaining and speaking bitter things against themselves, are but telling of the riches of Christ, and of what he has done for poor, lost and ruined sinners. They are doing alms unconsciously to the little ones, or those who feel poor. It is done in secret, and they do not claim any merit, nor do they wish to be seen of men. In other words, they let not their left hand know what their right hand doeth. "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water, only in the name of a disciple, verily I [Jesus] say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." Jesus says in another place, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

But more especially was my mind

and how what is called the Lord's prayer. There never has been a prayer offered to God which was well pleasing in his sight and rendered service to him, that was not indited by his Spirit. No one ever yet prayed in reality to God until they were taught of the Spirit. Jesus says, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," &c. Prayer is the gift of God, as is repentance; and when we receive the spirit of prayer, it is after the above manner we pray. It is to acknowledge what we are taught in our experience, "Thy kingdom come;" God's kingdom; and to know that his will is done in earth, as it is in heaven. This seems to me to teach that just as sure as the Lord's will is done in heaven, just so sure his will is done in earth. When brethren who do not believe in the predestination of all things pray, and say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," and yet say that some things transpire which are not in accordance with his predestination, they seem to be inconsistent in their prayer in asking, or in saying, "Thy will be done." For if the Lord did not predestinate it, I cannot see how it is his will that it should come to pass.

This manner of praying seems to be a confession of faith; but a portion of the remaining verses is more in the form of a petition, which reads, "Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Are we to infer from the reading of this clause that the Lord leads his people into temptation? We believe that the Lord delivers his people from evil; but do we believe that he leads us into temptation? I leave the question for each individual to answer for themselves. We read in the Scriptures of divine truth that Jesus, when he was baptized, was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil."—Matt. iv. 1. By what spirit was Jesus led? Was he ever led by an evil spirit? I think not. It was all in the purpose of God that he should be led into the wilderness, to be tempted in all points like unto his brethren, that he might be able to succor those that are tempted. The apostle James says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for

when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." But, "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."—James i. 12-14.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." Truly God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts; for they are as high above us as the heaven is above the earth. Well may we exclaim with the apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. xi. 33-36. And again it is said, "For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 30, 31. It is said that no flesh shall glory in his presence; for "our God is a consuming fire." Surely every man that has heard the testimony of Jesus, who shall add unto the things of the prophecy of the book which is spoken of in Revelation xxii., "God will add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Dear brethren, my mind has run in an entirely different channel from what I anticipated; but if I have been led by the Spirit of God, I am satisfied; if not, what I have written is only to darken counsel, and is in vain. I submit it to your superior judgment, and if published you will have to rectify many mistakes. Do with it as you think best, and I assure you it will all be right with me.

With love and fellowship to the household of faith, I remain your little brother in hope of life and immortality in Christ Jesus our Lord,  
P. M. SHERWOOD.

CURFEW, Pa., Aug. 27, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—In my last letter, published in the SIGNS for August first, I promised that in the future I would speak of my wonderful recovery from sickness; and as I received a letter from a dear brother in Canada, who is greatly afflicted, requesting me to write upon this subject as soon as convenient, I will try to-day to speak of some things in relation to the exercises of my mind, and the wonder-

ful power that wrought a radical change in my vile body, soon after I was baptized. As I look back to the time of my baptism, I do not wonder at the people of the world saying, "That poor, sick boy will never get well, because of the cold that he will take in going into the water. He cannot long survive." But the brethren look upon this ordinance in a different way from those who are in nature's darkness. Many professors of religion have attempted to improve upon the good old way of administering this ordinance, and have resorted to the ingenuity of men to improve upon the ordinances of the church of Christ; and some Arminians, who even admit immersion to be the scriptural mode, have hewed to themselves cisterns to hold the water, and say it is more refined. God's people are satisfied to receive all things pertaining to the church as they were delivered to them by Jesus and his apostles. So, when I offered myself to the church and was received a candidate for baptism, my afflictions of body did not appear to the brethren as any obstacle, they holding the belief that a subject of God's grace is prepared by his providence (when it is the Lord's time) to walk in his ordinances, and will be blessed in them. I often think of an expression of a dear old sister, a short time after my baptism. She said, "Being baptized did not kill you, as some thought it would. I did not hurt you one bit, did it?" For about three weeks after I was baptized I did not notice any change in my physical condition; but during those three weeks my mind was powerfully exercised in regard to the doctrine and my relation to the church. It all seemed so new to me, and so grand, that often I lost sight of my afflicted body, a sweet resignation settled over my soul, and I felt to say, All is well. It was a season of rejoicing with me. All this time I wondered why I did not see the way of salvation sooner; for it looked so plain now that I thought I could make any person see it. Nearly all the time of these three weeks which I have spoken of, when I could sit up, I was engaged in reading the Bible, SIGNS or hymn book. I cannot say that my mind was free from doubts, but generally comparatively so, and I had a feast that lasted some days. O what a blessing it is to feel grateful to God for his manifold mercies. I was enabled to take a retrospect of my life, and to see that his hand had protected me all my days. I felt, What shall I render unto God for his many favors unto me? I had nothing to offer to God for his goodness to me. But there seemed to be a song in my mouth, like the song of deliverance which Moses, the servant of God, sang after crossing the Red Sea. One day, while meditating upon these things, my mind turned to consider my sad state of health, and there arose a query in my mind about like

this, What is the object of your desire to get well? The answer came as quickly as thought, That I may live to preach thy word. This was a very solemn time for me, to think how I had been reduced to ashes, as it were, both in soul and body; and it now seemed as though it was to reveal himself in me, and the mystery of his will concerning me, to make me submissive to his holy will. I think I realized the truth that if God had designed that I should speak in his name, all the obstacles that now seemed to be in the way could be removed by that invisible hand which I already could see had wrought wonders. My ignorance, my man-fearing spirit and my affliction would not prevent my Master from performing all his pleasure. Some things that I have spoken of in former letters were published in the SIGNS for June fifteenth, 1861, as near as I remember; but what I am about to speak of now I have never been able to relate, and have only spoken of incidentally. Solemn feelings come over me now as I think of them, and a fear that is still awful to my mind. One day, about the last of October, 1861, as near as I can remember, I had been taking a simple stimulant which the doctor had prescribed for me. A very queer (and to me unaccountable) feeling came over me, different from anything which I had ever known before. I called my mother to the room, and said I was going to die, and desired that all the family should come in. Also, I told them of relatives at some distance, and even of a neighbor who had moved several miles away, all of whom I desired to see. Why I was thus prompted to have such desires has always since been unaccountable to me, for I had always been of a solitary disposition. I can now call to my mind the forms of many persons that called to see me for the last time on earth, and how they expressed sorrow for me, and how sorrowful they all were; and that, as I lay on the bed, at the sight of many persons my mouth was opened, my tongue set free, and the name of Jesus exalted; for then Jesus was all my theme. He had done wonders for me, whereof I was glad; and of this time which I am speaking about, as much of it as I remember, and what others have told me since, I reckon that if I have ever preached the gospel I did then. Also, I re-proved Arminians of self-righteousness. If there was ever a time in my experience when the presence of God was realized, it was just at this time. There appeared to me such a wonderful fullness, that time and sense sank into insignificance; and there was an overflowing of soul because of the love of God shed abroad there, which language fails to express. How long I was thus enabled to speak, I cannot tell; but perhaps until my strength failed. Of this time of great peril to me (in a natural sense) I have since

been afraid to inquire of those who were present, because it was humiliating to the flesh; and after my recovery I felt ashamed and mortified at all that had occurred, especially of my attempt to preach; for the tempter would suggest thoughts like these, You are a nice boy for a preacher. You have shown your ignorance, exposed yourself, and people are looking upon you as a failure. About this time I had refused to take any more medicine, saying that none but the Lord was able to heal me. I suppose (from what I was afterwards told) that as I grew worse some tried to administer some medicine to me, but failed in the attempt. They gave me up to die, seeing I was beyond the reach of human help. Many things that occurred to my mind during this great trial to my body are still fresh in my memory, but I have never since been able to speak of them, because many things which I thought I saw and heard have appeared to me as unspeakable, and I have sometimes thought they were too wonderful for my comprehension. My brother once told me that I had twenty spasms in one night, and I sank so low that the last vestige of hope was gone. One night, my uncle being present, told the attendant that I was dead; and he closed my eyes, and preparations were made for the funeral. How far these preparations were carried I do not know, but the report was circulated of my death. How long I remained in this condition I cannot now tell. But somehow life was noticed in me, and they told me that a powerful reaction took place in my system, which puzzled the whole medical fraternity, and that I told them that my cheeks should yet stand out with fatness. So returning health came, as it were, with a bound. So rapid was the improvement that many were astonished, and said that my case was unprecedented and providential. It was apparent to all, without the agency of any drug, medicine or human aid, my recovery was contrary to all human expectations. For nearly two years previous to my prostration my diet had been restricted to the plainest and simplest food, and taken in very small quantities. Now I asked for all kinds of food. I would be given small quantities, but this failed to satisfy. Then they gradually increased the quantity, and discovered a great improvement in my condition. Here is an interval in my life that is a blank to me, so far as regards common observation; but as pertaining to the exercise of the mind, it is full of deep experience, which time has not obliterated. I think it was about the last of December, 1860, when for the first time after my prostration I was able to fully comprehend all that was passing around me. I was also about this time able to walk about, but my mind wandered so that fears were entertained of my sanity, though I

was perfectly conscious of all that passed; but there seemed to be a tempting spirit within me that impelled me to act strange, which I have never since been able to account for. Father had estimated my weight in October, from what I had previously weighed, to be fifty pounds or less; and about the fifteenth of January, 1861, I weighed one hundred and ten pounds, so the reader can see that in three months, or less time, what a remarkable change took place in this vile and sinful body, and all through the great mercy of the omnipotent God, who ever rules according to his good pleasure, and who has preserved this natural life nearly twenty-eight years longer than reason would have suggested. And he has kept me from falling, by his grace, I hope and trust.

As ever, in fellowship,  
JEFFERSON BEEMAN.

WOODSTOCK, Mich., Sept. 15, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I have been repeatedly requested by sister Dulin and other sisters to write for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; but fearing I might prove an unpleasant intruder, and that my manner of writing might seem out of place in the SIGNS, I have felt a great degree of backwardness in doing so. Then I must always remember that place about women keeping silence in the churches, every time I attempt to write for publication. And I always thought the place where it says, "Study to be quiet," also referred particularly to sisters, until recently, when reading it over, I found it was spoken to the brethren in general. So this seems one thing we are all admonished to study. And another is, that the workmen study to show themselves approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth. Though we cannot by searching find out God, yet we are admonished to "be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." So the conclusion will force itself upon the mind that we are to study to know our place, and what the will of the Lord is concerning us.

What there is in my often criticised letters that the dear sisters would care to read, is not so very plain to me; and perhaps the dear ones do not know that they are often very much objected to by our wiser brethren, or they would not care to hear from me. I thought it might be right for them to know, for I make no pretension of being of the sounder and stronger class, although I once prided myself that I was; but now I must necessarily acknowledge that I am indeed most foolish, weak and blind; and I am often brought low, and can say with one in former times, "I am full of confusion," and have no clear-sightedness to walk by; and the older I grow, the more perfectly I must learn the lesson that we are to walk by faith, not by sight. I often feel much of a slum-

bering and slothful spirit, notwithstanding there are so many things that ought to stir the mind within, if indeed I ever possessed that pure mind which can only be stirred by those communications which are of a spiritual nature. In addition to the different periodicals of our order which come regularly to me, I have letters sent sometimes in one week sufficient to almost fill one of our papers, and very sweet and interesting they are indeed. Then I have the privilege of the Lord's house, as I trust, where I meet a few of the poor and afflicted ones each Sunday, and one Saturday in each month; and the past summer our association was held at this place, when I met with some I had never before seen, beside others who had kindly visited us before. Brother James Black was the only brother I had ever seen from Canada, except one who is a member with us, formerly of that place. Also, dear sister Mattie S. Derr, and sisters Emma F. and Ella Smith, were here, and I was favored to see their dear, pleasant faces in this life. On the whole, though so far removed from most of the churches and people of our order, yet I am in almost continual correspondence and conversation with them. Also, I should say that I have listened to what I receive as most excellent preaching; and yet I am like those who slept while the Master was sweating for them, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Dear as is the communion of saints, precious as is the privilege of sitting together in heavenly places, yet often I have the sweetest of spiritual exercises when I am all alone. Often in some place in my Bible where I did not think to find a blessing, a portion which seems so obscure in its meaning that I would hesitate to tell it to another, affords me a feast for many days.

But as I was trying to write by request of my sisters, I wished to tell how much comfort their letters are to me; not only the private ones, but those that have been published. The experience of sister Jennie Cross, published some time last spring, was full of interest to me. Her father, Elder Lambert Gass, was ordained at our church, and I was present at his ordination. Also, he was the first one who ever asked me if I had a hope in Christ; and I freely told him I had. He then asked me to tell him the reason of it. But I could not say one word, and was so strangely bewildered that I then thought if I ever should be asked that question again I would be careful to give a different answer. I have always had fervent charity for those who cannot talk freely of these things, having learned this truth, that of ourselves or without Jesus, we can do nothing. We are told to do nothing by partiality. And, indeed, all the letters of the dear sisters are precious, yet I must again speak of those of sister

Bessie Durand, whose name has been very sweet to me since I first saw it in print; and in her last letter was a place which was very beautiful, where she told of a sweetness in the sound of the home-going feet of the aged ones, who are nearing the time of their departure. And as it was about the time I was called to see my dear aged father laid away in his last sleep, her fitly spoken words brought many thoughts with them. I had not been discerning, like her, and had not thought that the faltering steps were telling us that the weary one was so near home. Father had always been with us, and I could not think he could go from our sight forever. Yet I can now recall the weary, far-off look, that patient waiting look, the failing of the feeble voice. Wherever I go, wherever I am, in all my thoughts, in whatever I do, the vision of a slightly bent form, with its crown of beautiful silvery hair above the sweet, aged face, rises before me. When I try to write, I must remember he is not here to eagerly look over his paper, to see if my name is there. As I was in health the frailest one of my people, I thought to go before them all; but I have lived to see them go before me; not only the aged, but the sweet young faces have been changed and sent away. Changed; O how true it is. Yet they were changed and turned only a little paler, a little sweeter, so that we can cherish that last look as partaking of the better country, the heavenly. O how precious they are, our precious dead.

"Former friends, O how I've sought them,  
Just to cheer my drooping mind;  
But they're gone, like leaves in autumn,  
Driven before a dreary wind."

We can have them no more, only in memory; and as the shadows fall and the day draws to a close, how full are our thoughts of them then. When we awake in the night, when we arise in the morning, they are with us everywhere. When the seasons return, bringing their treasures with them, we must think of those who once enjoyed them with us. Now we take them sadly alone.

Also, the last number of the SIGNS brought the letters of sisters Hollingsworth and Nannie B. Edwards, which were of interest to me. I see that sister Edwards is also sighing and crying for the iniquity done in the city, or church. I once thought in my simplicity that not one of our people would think of uniting with the institutions or secret orders of the world. But I have recently learned that I was very simple indeed; that some openly have membership with them, and some clandestinely, which is perhaps the worst shade of all, as it savors of double-mindedness; and we plainly read that "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." It seems strange that the people of God would be taking dark or secret oaths; for the Master said, "Swear not at all;

but let your communication be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil." There are also orders to which women belong, such as "Nuns," or "Sisters of Charity," "Kings' Daughters," &c. But whether it would be considered a weak point for the brethren of the Baptist Church to object to the sisters uniting with these orders or not, I am not able to say. I have always thought that if we are indeed daughters of the King who reigns in Zion, if we obey his law, it will be all that is required of us; for that law is the law of love, and teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to do all the good and kindness we can to every one, without being bound by societies of any kind, being done freely as unto the Lord; to do good to all men, and "especially unto the household of faith." Here is where the specialty comes in: not being bound by oaths and bonds to be of special benefit to some secret order, but to the household of faith. It would please me greatly if dear Elder Purington, or some of the brethren, would give their views upon the subject, whether it is right to correspond, commune with and hold in fellowship those who belong to these orders. I have never thought it was. But I am so often informed that my ideas are so incorrect, and amount to so very little, that I begin to think that possibly that may be the case. I did not think to write in this way when I commenced, and it is lamentable that my mind will be drifting to things that are so unpleasant. It would be so much sweeter to always have one's mind upon heavenly things if we could; but we are in a world of sad realities, with which we have to contend, and which must necessarily draw our attention at times. I have always thought we were to have, or did have, a rule of practice as well as faith, and to add to our faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

In christian love,  
KATE SWARTOUT.

GHEENT, Ky., May 27, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Yesterday evening I walked down to the Ohio River, only a very short distance from my home, to witness the administration of the ordinance of baptism by a preacher of the Missionary Baptist Church. The administration of that ordinance, it matters not by whom, has for many years filled me with feelings of the deepest solemnity. When I witness the administration of that ordinance, it calls my mind away back to that period in which our Lord was laid in Joseph's new tomb, and that glorious morning when he arose from that tomb in everlasting triumph

over all the powers of death. Looking back to that triumph, he said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore." Under the law, the morning and evening sacrifices were offered. They prefigured the great offering which he was in the fullness of time to make. They bore testimony to the faith of the spiritual Israelite, to that great offering which would forever perfect them that were sanctified, set apart, in our glorious Lord. Those offerings were but types and shadows, yet they pointed to the greatest event that ever had or ever would occur in the history of the world; an event which has inspired the sweetest songs that have or ever will be sung by saints and angels; yea, an event which will attune the songs of the redeemed around the eternal throne throughout the endless cycles of eternity. That ordinance points the faith of the spiritually minded sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty in the gospel dispensation to that great and wondrous event. Our Lord was baptized in Jordan, and the meaning of that name was judgment. In no other river that plowed its course through the surface of this earth could he be baptized. No other river was called the river of judgment. Upon the shores of that river he stood with John the Baptist when he was about to declare by the ordinance of baptism to his saints in all coming time his obedience to the demands of the divine law which his people in their earthly relationship had violated, and thus take upon himself that judgment which rested upon his people by reason of sin. The river was named in infinite wisdom, and that name was infinitely appropriate. The administrator was chosen of God from the very ancients of eternity, and his coming to fulfill the wonderful purpose of Jehovah was foretold by the prophet who was inspired from on high to reveal or make known to his people the advent of our Lord. The prophet Malachi, when speaking in the name of the Lord, says, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." Then it is evident that the administrator of that ordinance was chosen and sent to prepare the way. In the preparation of that way he must fulfill all righteousness. The priests under the legal dispensation dared not refuse to offer the morning and the evening sacrifices; and John's refusal to administer that ordinance would have availed nothing. Without it the testimony in his church of his burial and resurrection would not have been given, and in the ordinances of his house his saints would have had but one witness to bear testimony to their faith of the wondrous things which lie at the

foundation of all their hopes. In the ordinance of the Lord's Supper they had the witness bearing testimony to their faith of his broken body and shed blood, by which they were redeemed from all iniquity. But thanks to his holy name, the redemption that was in Christ Jesus went farther than their redemption from under the law. It not only spoiled death of its sting, but it destroyed the victory of the grave. Our Lord in infinite wisdom, for the comfort and joy of his redeemed, established the ordinance of baptism in his church, which points away to his burial and resurrection, and enables them to rejoice in the fullness of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. O what wondrous wisdom and infinite love and mercy are made manifest to the dear saints, and revealed to them by the Spirit, when in their earthly pilgrimage they deeply mourn over the power and dominion of sin. But in the house of the Lord they are comforted, and are made to rejoice in Christ Jesus their Lord; for in his day the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountain, and exalted above the hills; and in that house he gave his saints two witnesses, which pointed their faith to a perfect and complete salvation, in which the announcement made by a celestial messenger to Joseph was fulfilled, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins;" and which was confrmed to the shepherds who watched their flocks by night, by an angel, who said, "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." All things under the law were figurative, were shadows, which pointed to Christ, and the fulfillment by him of the things prefigured by the sacrifice which he in his own glorious person would make in the end of that dispensation. Under that dispensation no fact could be established without two witnesses. Hence the Lord gave them the law and the prophets. From and by those two witnesses they had their spiritual minds turned to the great and wonderful things which he in the fullness of time would accomplish for his people. A part of those great and glorious things was his burial and triumphant resurrection, which were prefigured by his baptism. He was baptized in Jordan, in the river of judgment, and said to John, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." In that baptism was fulfilled all righteousness. Remember that he said, "All righteousness." In it he presented to the spiritually minded in all ages to come, in figure, in emblem, his triumph after he had fulfilled all righteousness in the redemption of his people. They must be made righteous, or they could not enter

upon that glorious inheritance which was secured to them as the joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. He must be made unto them righteous. When he said to John, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," he used language which pointed to that offering and his glorious triumph over the sting of death and the victory of the grave. Without that offering all would have been forever consigned to suffer the woeful penalty of the law, which man had violated. In his baptism he fulfilled all righteousness; for in figure he was buried, and in figure he arose a triumphant conqueror. The apostle says, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. He was the first fruits of those that slept. He being the first fruits from the grave, sanctified the whole harvest, secured the resurrection of the whole house of spiritual Israel. Then surely when he was baptized he in emblem fulfilled all righteousness. Without his baptism into death, and his resurrection from that state of death, all would yet be in their sins, and the fearful thunderings of Sinai would have forever echoed wherever poor, sin-polluted, mortal man traced the green plains of earth. But, O glorious thought! O blessed assurance! Christ is now risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. Christ has fulfilled all righteousness. He emblemized that fulfillment in his baptism. And you, dear saint, in your baptism declare your faith in his finished work; declare that he has for you fulfilled all righteousness. You declare that he has by his death and resurrection redeemed you from all iniquity; and being thus redeemed, you arise in your baptism to walk in newness of life. It is thus you put on Christ in baptism, because you in your baptism do show forth the burial and resurrection of your glorious Lord. You in your experience have realized that in your relation to earth you were dead in trespasses and sins; and by the power of the Holy Spirit you have been quickened, made alive. And when you arose from your baptism, you declared by that emblem that you, like your Lord, were alive forevermore; that you were regenerated from under the demands of the law, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus. Then surely our Lord used no unmeaning words when he said to John, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." But, mark you, he uses the pronoun "us." John was the first Baptist; and while he by the authority of heaven was named John, yet the name Baptist was added by reason of his being the first to administer that solemn ordinance. We call it a solemn ordinance, because in it is prefigured the burial of our Lord; and we remember what solemnity pervaded his disciples while he lay in the darkness of the tomb. But O what joy reign-

ed in their hearts when they knew that he had risen from that tomb. This poor world in all its fading glories presents no joy that can be compared with that which filled the hearts of those dear and loving women who went at early dawn to visit the sepulchre, to whom the angel said, "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." "They departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy." Now, dear saints, when you by faith behold in baptism that burial and that glorious resurrection, you have great joy in knowing that your Lord is alive evermore, and you walk in newness of life. The two Marys departed quickly from the sepulchre. So your steps are hastened in getting away from those evidences of death. Then you, like them, want to tell to the dear followers of Jesus what a dear Savior you have found. When he meets you, and says to you, "All hail!" you, like the bride described in the Canticles, say, "I held him, and would not let him go." Then how precious is that ordinance in the house of our God to all his dear saints. When they witness it, and by faith behold what wonderful things are prefigured by it, their steps are quickened in the paths of righteousness, and their prayer is that they may adorn their profession by a godly walk and conversation; that they may live to the honor and glory of that great name in which they trust; the name of him who is the Lord our righteousness; to whose name be all the glory.

H. COX.

UNION, Boone Co., Ky.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Having to renew my subscription for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, by your permission I thought I would jot down a few thoughts for publication on 1 Peter i. 1-4, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." The above language is of great interest to somebody; and if we can, let us find out who is interested, for to them belongs the promise. They are heirs to an inheritance that never is to fade away. O that I could know I am heir to such a promise. A glimpse, a single glimpse, sometimes almost raises me above earth. When God sometimes removes the dark pavilion that over-

shadows his face, and permits me to see but a glimpse of his divine perfections, I am ready to cry out, like David, and say, "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man, that thou visitest him?" But the apostle was not speaking of an inheritance to be received in this life, for he tells us it is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time. So this is not the place that we are to receive it; for we are not prepared to receive it here; nor is earth the place that it is to be received. It is reserved in heaven. Reserved means to keep back or lay aside for a certain purpose, for those for whom it was prepared, and not to be given to another. We are born here into this world, heirs to all the evils of this world, as well as all the blessings that this life affords, which is a great blessing, if we appreciate it aright. We see that all we are heirs to here must soon pass away. We may be heirs to large estates; and if by industry and an economical course in life we not only keep or hold what is given us, but add to it, we must soon leave it; for we see death and decay indelibly stamped upon everything that hath earthly life. Therefore our earthly inheritance must soon pass away. It is not like that inheritance that the apostle speaks of. That is never to fade away, but is kept by the power of God. Think what safe hands it is in. There is no danger of it ever being lost or failing in the end. The apostle says it is preserved in Christ Jesus. I cannot see how anything could be more secure. If we had lived in the days of our Savior on earth, and asked him to give us assurance of our acceptance with him, he could not have given us a more plain or positive one than the apostle has given us here, if we are heirs. In the twenty-third verse he says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away; but the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." And this is the birth which the apostle alludes to when he says that we are born to an inheritance that is incorruptible, and fades not away. The Savior told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." I understand that when our Savior said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," he evidently meant the gospel heaven; and that birth is a necessary prerequisite to the enjoyment of the inheritance that the apostle speaks of, which is to be enjoyed when we are born from the grave, to an inheritance that is never to fade away. Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be

born of water and the Spirit, he could not see the kingdom of God. Water is spoken of in the Bible as representing the love of God. He said to the woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that talketh with thee, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Here water is used to represent love. John says, "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Here water is spoken of as representing the love of God. It also represents life. Then water represents life and love. Then to be born of the Spirit, and life, and love, it seems to me, would fully represent a child of God. But I will leave this for abler pens than mine, and will try to return to the subject I started on.

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." If according to the foreknowledge of God, it surely is right. If not right, who can alter it? If we charge God with injustice in electing or choosing, to whom can we appeal? Can we alter it? Is it not best to let what God has done stand, and try to be reconciled to it? If we charge him with injustice, where is the sheriff that will arrest him? Before whom will we try him? Who will sit in judgment against him? If found guilty, what punishment will you lay on him? Brethren Beebe, I wish I could tell you how glad I am that God is a Sovereign. His immutable counsel will stand in spite of men and devils. In this I sometimes find rest I can find nowhere else. In this there is safety. Election saves somebody: without it no one could ever be saved. We have all failed, and come short of the glory of God. But men say the election is not over, and that we all still have a chance. To them belongs the everlasting task of doing what God has said cannot be done. But we worship a God that has all power in heaven and in earth; one that knows the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He says, "I lift my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever." Who can stay his hand, or who hath directed the Lord, or been his counselor? Who hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, or who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing, and all nations before him are as nothing and vanity. It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.—Isaiah xl.

The word elect means something. Elect means to choose somebody. If we commence at the beginning of Genesis and read through the Old and New Testaments, we will see God's election or choice of men and women, beginning at the first two that were born, Cain and Abel; then Jacob and Esau; then Isaac and Ishmael; and through the whole Bible there is nothing but God's discriminating grace or choice. It would take too much time for me to write all that is in the Bible. I am satisfied with it just as it reads, and I think and hope all God's dear children are; because holy men of old wrote as they were directed by inspiration of God. I might add that all who are born of God, born again, and made to see themselves in their proper light before God, and have had some soul-refreshing foretaste of immortal felicity, are living in daily expectation that when this earthly house of their tabernacle is dissolved, they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where they shall be forever free from all sin; yea, where they shall be free from all the assaults of hell, and the sorrows of this world, and every caring care, fear and distress, and be forever with the Lord, where they shall see as they are seen, and know as they are known, and in one immortal song chant forth the high praises of their Lord and Savior forever. How the soul longs to be with Christ, which is far better than to dwell below; and they are expecting the time to come when their immortal eyes will be favored with a clear view of the unsullied glory, when all their powers will be sweetly employed in realizing those immortal blessings which are in reserve for those who wait upon the Lord. The Bible talks about the natural man. It is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes. Does this look like turning to God and seeking salvation? I think nothing but the intervention of God's electing grace can turn one from such a wayward course. Indeed, if that is a fair presentation of man by nature, what but the power of God can change him? I know nothing else can do it. The Savior has said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." He gives them eternal life, because he is the author of eternal life. Ought we not then to praise his great name for his mercy in bringing

us up from our low estate? As David said, He hath established our goings, and put a new song in our mouths, even praise unto our God. They that put their trust in the Lord shall not be removed. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, to watch over them. He has given his angels charge over them, to keep and bear them up in their arms, lest they dash their foot against a stone. Are not our praises due to him who takes such care of us? Ought we not to walk in his statutes and keep his commandments, and our lives be devoted to his service as long as we live. He has said for our comfort, "Blessed is the man that puts his trust in the Lord: for he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Are not these encouraging words?

Yours in hope,

MOSES LANE.

ACWORTH, Ga., Oct. 1, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BROTHERN:—I have permission to send you the inclosed letter for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if you see proper. Others as well as myself have expressed a desire to see it sent out to the household of faith. But at first through brotherly kindness the letter was copied for me by the writer, who is now upon a bed of languishing; but we hope he will soon be well as usual. He has been a succorer of many, and of myself also; for while I have not the gift of expression as he has, it is a real comfort of soul to sit and listen to his godly conversation, coupled with fear and meekness of wisdom in the way that he expresses himself. For I hope that I feel the witness within, testifying to what he says. May God almighty bless, comfort and keep you in the narrow way, as ever heretofore, is my humble desire, for Jesus' sake, and his name have all the praise. Your sister in affliction and trouble, but still in hope of continual help from him of whom it is written there is no change nor shadow of turning with him.

L. P. McDANIEL

ACWORTH, Ga., Aug. 29, 1888.

DEAR BROTHER COLE:—There are many reasons why I should not attempt to write anything to the children of God, proposing to give them instruction, the more prominent among them being the fact of my corruption, ignorance and inability. If Job would lay his hand upon his mouth (from his vileness) and say, "I will speak no more," surely I should place a lock upon my mouth, and not open my lips unto a whisper; for most of my time I am in such darkness that even the light that is in me (if indeed there is any light in me) seems nothing but darkness. My evidences seem so dim

that I can hardly claim to be a child of God. When I look back over my past life, I see nothing but a succession of transgressions, and a life spent in folly and unthankfulness, and little to give me grounds for hope that I can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Not that I attach any merit to anything that I, a sinful mortal, could do, but Paul says, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The Savior said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The apostle John says, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." The Savior also says, "The tree is known by its fruits." Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. If we are the children of God, we certainly are under the strongest obligations to love, honor and obey him. But my course through life has been so far from what a child of God should be, that I cannot have faith and confidence. I know he has been very kind and merciful to me all through my life, and I know I have reason to love, honor and obey him; but I have been too negligent and unthankful, and altogether unworthy of his goodness, which fills my heart with sadness, and makes me fear that I am not a child of God. I meet with but few, if any, who are so deep in darkness and gloom as I am; but I am powerless to make it otherwise. I take great pleasure in the company of my brethren, and enjoy their conversation, and feel to witness with them; but somehow I fear very much that I am not of the family. In my youthful days, sin and a deep conviction of my corruption annoyed me very much, and gave me much trouble; but I looked forward to old age with some hope of getting clear of sin and temptation, thinking I would go down to the grave in peace and quiet. But it seems to me now that my youthful days were the best days of my life.

You said in your letter that I had not been as full on the doctrine of predestination and the decrees of God as you wished, and asked me to write again and be more explicit. My dear brother, I do not know, and therefore I desire to be very cautious in traveling (or pretending to travel) over ground that is dark and mysterious. Secret things belong to God, and sinful mortals should only try to handle such things as the Lord sees proper to reveal to them through his holy word. I feel satisfied, without doubt, that God has done all things well, and man is only sinful, wicked and disobedient. God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and none can say to him, What doest thou? He said to Israel by one of the prophets, "If then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear?" Now, if he is our Father, we should delight to honor and obey him; and as our Master, we should fear to offend him, and

more especially as we have realized that he has been a kind and merciful Master, and has borne with our sins, disobedience and rebellion so long, and has not cut us off. We should content ourselves with trying to render him praise, and obey him in all that he says. I have no doubt but what there are many things connected with his creation that man will never understand in this world; neither would it be prudent or proper for him to know them; but we seem to be possessed of the same desire that our mother Eve was possessed with, which induced her to listen to the deceptive lies of the serpent; and not only to listen, but also to disobey the command of God, which brought death and destruction to all her posterity, and is the cause of all our woe. Although we should not rebel against God, nor murmur at anything that he in his providence sees proper to do, yet we see many things transpiring every day of our lives which we would wish were otherwise; but we are too shortsighted and ignorant to know what is best for us, and therefore we should be content to know that God is all-wise, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, and for his own glory. And he will be glorified in his creation, for he does his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and no one has any right to question his authority, and say, What doest thou? The children of God have abundant reason to thank, adore and praise him, for he is their Judge. The Lord is their Law-giver, the Lord is their King, and he will save them, and they have nothing to fear. But we should be very careful, and fear to disobey him. He has loved his people with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness he draws them. O with what pleasure we should praise him. But I find my nature so prone to evil, that I hate my own life; that is, I hate the sin that is in me. We have no righteousness of our own. It is the righteousness of Christ that sustains us in this life, and will justify us before God. We must have on the robe of righteousness wrought out by Jesus, or we cannot stand before God in peace. The brightness of the purity of his perfection would consume us immediately. The children of Israel could not bear even the reflection of the glory of the Lord from the face of Moses, and how could we stand the brightness of his glory if brought before him in our own filthiness? The man that got in among the wedding guests without having on the wedding garment was cast out immediately. The wedding garment is that robe of righteousness wrought out by the Savior for all his dear children, and is freely given them and placed upon them. Joshua's filthy rags were taken off, and clean garments put on him. And unless we have on that garment, we are not capacitated to enjoy heaven.

There is no heaven for any but those that have on that glorious robe. I have for many years been trying to examine myself to see whether or not I have on that glorious robe; but the evidence, according to my own judgment, is against me; and if I had to pass judgment, I would be compelled to say, Guilty, guilty. But I still feel like begging for mercy, and like the leprous Jew of old say, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." I sometimes fear that I have been so mean that he cannot forgive me without placing a strain on his dignity and purity. But the Lord can do all things that it is his pleasure to do; therefore I try to appeal to him. Sometimes I feel like it is a sin for me to try to pray to him, knowing that I am altogether unworthy to receive his mercies; but then, like Peter, I say, To whom shall I go?

Dear brother Cole, in the foregoing I have written in a detached and scattering manner on some things that my mind is more engrossed with than anything else; mainly, I suppose, because it is on my own imperfections and corruptions. It may prove irksome to you to read, but I hope you are possessed with that charity that will forgive an erring mortal. I would still prefer to continue to write on my own imperfections, rather than take up a subject embracing the sovereignty of God, the ordination of God, or the predestination and decrees of God. Before beginning, I will say that I have just been reading a book entitled, "The Gospel Plan of Salvation," by an eminent Campbellite, in which he denies that God unalterably decreed or ordained anything before the foundation of the world. He also says that God did not foreknow all things. He quotes many Scriptures, and to the natural man his argument looks quite reasonable. He makes everything conditional. He sets up his own standard of justice, builds his temple, and places God upon it; and most of the religionists of the world do the same thing. They say that if God determines things beforehand, it is not just in God to punish a man for carrying out his purpose. Forgetting, it seems, that God owns all things, and has the sole right to dispose of all things as he pleases. He sits upon his own throne of justice, and consults with no other power. He has not brought himself under obligation to anybody. He says, "As the heavens are above the earth, so are my ways above your ways." We should in all cases be still and know that he is God. You seem to find some objections to brother Chick's letter, where he speaks of the troubles of Job being sent by the appointment of God; that if God did appoint those roguish Chaldeans and Sabeans to steal Job's property, and appoints the wicked acts of man, men ought not to be blamed. And you give me this illustration: If a man

says to me, "I am going to kill you," I must submit quietly, and say to him, God has predestinated it, and therefore you are not to blame. Now that is looking at it from a human standpoint, and placing us on our own temple of justice, erected by ourselves, in our ignorance and blindness. As I am too ignorant to answer it, I will let the God of all the earth, his Son, and his apostles Paul and Peter, answer it directly. Job regarded his calamity as having been sent by the Lord, and said to his wife, "What! shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" And he told his wife that she spoke as one of the foolish women. And do you not think that Job felt much better in believing that the Lord sent the calamity upon him, than he would have felt if he had thought that he was in the hands of Satan and those roguish Chaldeans and Sabeans, to do to him according to their avaricious desires and maliciousness unlimited? God said to Satan, "Touch not his life;" and also, "Thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause." Not one, I suppose, would question or deny that God sent the whirlwind that destroyed Job's children; and I do not suppose that any one would say that a part of Job's calamities were from the Lord, and a part from Satan and the wicked Chaldeans and Sabeans. Why God saw proper to deliver Job into the hands of Satan, as he did, I cannot tell; and there are many things that God does that I cannot give any reasons for or see into. God does not see proper to give his reasons to mortal man for all his works. Now, brother Cole, I will give you a case for illustration. Suppose you were to be afflicted in body, or loss of children and property, or both, as Job was, would you not much prefer that God would send your afflictions under his own control, than to give you into the power of Satan and wicked men? Would you not rather think that your calamity was appointed of the Lord, than that Satan and his emissaries visited it upon you by their own power? Yes, brother Cole, you would say, as David did, "Let me fall into the hands of the Lord, and not into the hands of man." I do not know how to discriminate between ordination, predestination and decrees. Our Campbellite author, whose book I have been reading, denies that God ever made any unalterable decree, predestination or ordination, and also disputes God's foreknowledge; but I have always understood that the Scriptures teach that God has from the beginning known all things; for it is said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." There is nothing new or old with him. I look upon the creation as one chain, all linked together; and if the chain could be broken, some things might fail to come to pass, and that would destroy the whole

arrangement. But I understand that God has all knowledge, that all things are immediately before his all-seeing eye, and that he will not be disappointed in anything; and that all things work together to bring about whatsoever he has determined should be done; otherwise we would have to acknowledge that some other power was at work against the ordinations of God, with at least a probability of success. Satan and his emissaries are no doubt at work trying to defeat the power of God, and have been ever since he approached our mother Eve in the garden of Eden; but we have the promise of God that he will destroy all of Satan's work, "For he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." But we believe that all will finally work out according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. And if it takes the wicked works of men or Satan, God overrules all to bring about what he designed beforehand; for we see that he has done it in many cases. The Lord told Abraham, two hundred years beforehand, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land that was not theirs, before Abraham had any son. And see how he brought it about. See how Joseph's brethren became jealous of him, and envious towards him, and finally sold him to the Ishmaelites, who carried him to Egypt. Look at his treatment by the wicked woman. He must be cast into prison and remain there until the time arrived for his appearing before Pharaoh. God brings on a famine, and Joseph's brethren are forced by necessity to go to Egypt to get bread. Any one can see the hand of God in it. Joseph says to his brethren, "I know that ye thought evil against me; but God, for your sakes, sent me here." Paul says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" His ways with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the children of Israel, are certainly very mysterious, and in many cases not considered just by the natural man, and especially as between Jacob and Esau, and many other cases; also in the case of Job. The Lord said to Satan that Job was an upright man, and maintained his integrity; and yet he says, "Thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause." And how did he do it? He first sent the Sabeans, and they slew the servants, and took away the oxen and asses, and then fire came down from God out of heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants. Then the Chaldeans in three bands carried away the camels and slew the servants. Then a great wind came from the wilderness and blew down the house and destroyed them. And then it is said that Satan sorely afflicted him with boils

and sores. Now the roguish and murderous Chaldeans and Sabeans did what they did through an avaricious desire to possess themselves of property in an unlawful manner, and therefore were violaters of the law of God, and consequently were guilty, and deserved punishment. The Lord also appointed and anointed wicked kings to rule over his own chosen people, both Judah and Israel, to punish them for their rebellion and disobedience. But that did not justify them in their wicked acts. The Lord says he uses the wicked as his sword to punish the wicked; and God works all things after the counsel of his own will. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above." Again Jesus says, "I could pray to my Father, and he would presently give me twelve legions of angels; but how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Peter said on the day of Pentecost, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "And the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth, Lord, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Notwithstanding they did what God had determined beforehand to be done, do you propose to say that they were not guilty and should not be punished? Remember, they had only done to him what they had been trying to do all through his life, and, as Pilate said, through envy. Jesus himself said there was a necessity for it; for on the day of his resurrection, as two of the brethren were going from Jerusalem to Emmaus, Jesus drew near and went with them, and asked them the reason of their sadness. They said unto him, "Art thou but a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not heard the things which have lately come to pass, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, whom the rulers have crucified?" And they expressed their disappointment, and said, "We hoped that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel." Then he said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Paul says, in the ninth

chapter of Romans, after telling that the Lord raised up Pharaoh for the purpose of showing his power in him, that he had mercy on whom he would. "Thou wilt say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" But Paul makes a short answer, and that without any apology, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" There seem to have been some in Paul's time who proposed to judge from their own standpoint; and there are many now who look at things in the same way; but I cannot so understand it. My main desire is that I may not say or do anything contrary to the holy will of God, nor offend one of his little ones; for it would be better for me that a millstone were hanged about my neck, and I cast into the midst of the sea, than to offend one of them, for they are too precious in his sight.

Dear brother Cole, I have written a long letter, and perhaps have said some things that ought not to have been said; but I hope you have been too well instructed by the Spirit of the Lord to be injured. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

Yours as ever,

M. C. AWTRY.

WELLSBORO, Pa., July 29, 1888.

ELDER VAIL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I promised you a long time ago that I would write my experience and send it to you. I have been putting it off from time to time, until to-day. My mind is running upon the Lord's dealings with me, as I hope and trust, and I will try and pen some of them down. I never believed that I could get religion by my good works. I never had heard an Old Baptist preach, but I thought that the Lord alone could convert and save souls. I was in the habit of attending Free Will Baptist meetings, but their preaching did not affect me one particle. My heart was so hard that I only made fun of their preaching. On our way home, when the converts would talk to me upon the subject of religion, I told them it would take the Lord to convert me, and he did not need their help. At that time I knew nothing about trouble on account of sin. On March 21, 1868, we sat by the cradle and saw the spirit of my little sister take its flight to God who gave it. When the last moment came, she raised her eyes toward heaven, and such a lovely sight I never saw before. She looked like an angel, and my weeping heart said, What an angel. Why could it not have been me? At that moment I saw myself the greatest sinner in the world, not fit to live. Why did not the Lord take me and leave her? I felt I could take no more comfort in living, and that when I died hell was my

portion. The Lord had ordained it so. O the agony of my soul! I can never tell it. I tried to pray, but it did me no good, for I grew worse every day. My parents were troubled about me, and would ask me where I was sick. I would say, I am not sick; and will be all right by-and-by. I did not want them to know that I was afraid that I was going to die and go to hell. I felt every night that I should never see daylight again; that I was so wicked the Lord was angry with me. I would read the Bible every chance I could get without being seen. All I found there seemed good for the elect of God, but I was cast out forever—no hope for me. I would wander about in the fields between sundown and dark, and when I got where I thought no one could see me I would kneel down and try to pray; but it seemed to me that my prayers did not rise higher than my head. I would go down to grandfather's to get him to pray for me, but when I got there I dared not ask him. On my way home I would cry. I felt that he was one of God's chosen, and if he would pray for me the Lord would hear his prayer. I would think the next time I went I would ask him; but I would not say a word. One night I went to stay with him, and before he went to bed he sat in his chair and raised his eyes to heaven. I could see his lips move, and I wished he would pray aloud. He was an Old School Baptist preacher, Elder Moyer. Time passed on, my trouble grew more, if possible, and I felt afraid to pray. I thought God would damn me for trying to pray. I was so wicked, I thought something would happen to me. I dared not uncover my head in the night, for fear I would see some awful sight if I did. I felt that it was a great sin for me to try to pray, but it was continually in my mind, "Lord, save me." Yet I felt he would not. Time passed on till in the fall of the same year. One night as I went to bed I thought I never could live to see another day, and I cried myself to sleep, as usual. I awoke in the night, and thought I heard something say, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." O how happy I felt. I uncovered my head for the first time in many months, and O how light it was. I never saw such a lovely night in my life. I felt as light as a feather. I did not know what it meant. I looked around, but could see no one. But I felt sure some one said, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." These were the happiest hours of my life. I thought that when daylight came I would go and tell grandfather what a dear Savior I had found. I could not see how God could save me, but thought he had.

"Tongue cannot express  
The sweet comfort and peace  
Of a soul in its earliest love."

But my joy did not last long. I dared not tell grandfather, for fear I would deceive him, thinking that

perhaps it was but a dream. But I knew I was awake. Thus I lived along for many years, doubting and fearing I had been deceived, and dared not say a word to any one about it. How I wished grandfather would preach, so that I could hear an Old Baptist preach; for I did not believe one word that the others preached. I went to prayer meeting one night, and heard grandfather pray. That was the first time I had heard an Old Baptist pray. How different it sounded from the rest, who believed that their good works would save them. The next day grandfather came to our house, and I asked him if he believed that the Lord needed any help from any man to save sinners. He said no; that all they could do amounted to nothing; that the Lord saved his people; their names were written in the Lamb's book of life before the world began. This was a great comfort to me. But it was not long after this that Elder St. John came to preach. Then I heard what my soul longed to hear, salvation by grace. How I longed to have a place among the people of God, but thought I was not fit to be among such a dear people. I wanted to get better, but I grew worse all the time. I would think, I will never sin again; but before I was aware some wicked thought would come into my mind. Finally I went to a covenant meeting at Cherry Flats. Elder Durand was there. I tried to relate my experience, was received, and baptized on Sunday. But I do not know why they received me, for I could say little or nothing. My poor heart was broken to pieces. I wanted a home among them, but felt too unworthy; they were all so good, and I so bad. O how I was troubled the night before I was baptized. My husband was not a professor, and said he thought my place was at home. O how bad that made me feel. What a dread it was for me to go to meeting on Sunday morning. But when we got to the water all my trouble left me, and I was in a peaceful state of mind for a week. I cannot tell how I felt. I believe that I shed tears of joy, such as I never felt before nor since. But O what trials I have passed through since then. I have found that the way of the transgressor is hard.

"What peaceful hours I then enjoyed,  
How sweet their memory still."

But they have left an aching void which the world can never fill. I will close. This looks so much like the writer, I am ashamed to send it.  
Your unworthy sister,

S. J. ELY.

RUTLEDGE, Ga., Sept. 1, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—I feel impressed at this time, and have felt impressed at different times, to write for your valuable paper, which has stood the test in defense of God and truth from its commencement, as far as I can learn. When I was quite a boy

my dear father, the late Elder James H. Montgomery, would send me to the post-office for his mail, and I noticed that he would cull out of his other papers the SIGNS, which was much smaller than it now is. He would be so intent on its perusal that frequently he would not leave his seat until he had read it through, and he and mother would spend hours in talking about what he had just read. Father was almost a constant reader of it from its commencement until his death, with a little interruption during the late war, when there was a suspension to the southern states. It is a paper that has been hailed with delight by my dear uncle, the late Deacon D. F. Montgomery, and also by my dear brother, the late Elder William S. Montgomery, and lastly by the poor, unworthy writer, who is the last survivor of my father's family, who have taken the SIGNS so long. Language fails me to express my thanks to you for your great favor bestowed upon such a poor worm; for I often feel that I am a worm, and no man. In the perusal of the SIGNS I have found many things that have proved of much comfort to me; and to-day, while reading the number for August first, present volume, I found an excellent piece of poetry written by Abby G. Clark.

"Be with me still—'I need thee every hour,  
To shield and keep me from the tempter's power.  
In crooked by-paths oft I wander wide;  
If thou wilt lead no harm can me betide."

This language is expressive of my feelings. I feel weak, poor, dependent, lame, naked and blind. I cannot trust in an arm of flesh, for that is too weak. As for earthly riches, I have none. I am so blind to spiritual things that I can only see as Christ gives me light. I am so lame in spiritual things that I will have to be carried to the King's table to eat of the dainties of his rich feast. How refreshing it is to be permitted to eat and drink at the Master's table, when we come into the garden of the Lord, and gather the myrrh with the spice, eat the honey with the honeycomb, and drink the wine with the milk. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." When we are permitted to enter into the garden of the Lord, not in our own strength, but in the strength of our Daysman, or Mediator, we then can enjoy all the sweets that are desired for the occasion. Without this Daysman, or Intercessor, it is useless for us to enter. There are ample provisions for every needy case. The boasting Pharisee has no use for such a feast as this. He thanks God that he is not as other men, or as the poor publican. This publican is a sensible sinner, and needed help, and just such help as he needed was at hand. His prayer, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," was heard and answered. He went down to his house justified, rather than the Pharisee. Can it be possible that I

am in as good condition as the publican was? When we feel that we are lost and undone, without hope or God in the world, and we need spiritual help, the help is near at hand. But we are not conscious that it is so near, until it is whispered in our ears, "Son, or daughter, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." Instead of eternal banishment, peace and joy shine forth in the soul, new desires are brought to view, new love springs up in the soul, and, in fact, everything seems lovely. Grace produces all this. The set time has come, and instead of darkness there is light; instead of bitter there is sweet.

Dear saints, I have scattered over a great deal of space, and you will glean but little or no wheat. God has been good and kind to me all my life. I have suffered in many ways, the Lord has let me live to be sixty-one years of age. I am the only living son of my father. I have five sisters living, so far as I know: My oldest sister is aged seventy-five years, and my youngest fifty-five. My desire is that the Lord will keep me unto the end of my mortal pilgrimage, that I may keep this sinful body under subjection. I desire the prayers of all the saints.

Yours in hope,

D. F. P. MONTGOMERY.

NOVEMBER, 27, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I thought I would try, in my weak way, to tell you some of the dealings of the blessed Lord, as I hope, with me, a poor sinner; for I am nothing short of that. I know I am not worthy of the least of his mercies, but yet I have a faint hope that the heavenly King has not cast me off forever; for I have been trying for years to put my trust in him, who alone can do helpless sinners good. I know I have no righteousness of my own; nothing but sin and uncleanness, notwithstanding all his mercy and grace to poor, unworthy me. But I still try to lean upon his strong arm for support, for I know he is able to keep me from falling. If it were not for that little hope that dwells in me, I do not know how I could live in this world of trouble and affliction, for I have my share of both; and I think sometimes they bind heavy upon me. But I wish not to murmur or complain, for they are not more than I deserve. The twenty-third Psalm has been a dear little one to me, as well as a great many others. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Dear friends, when we can lie down in those green pastures, what joy and comfort fill our hearts. I am often cast down, in darkness and trouble; but when I read these soul-cheering promises I can but feel sweet consolation within my heart, and the hope springs up that when the battle is fought the blessed Lord will take me where trouble, trials and sin shall be no

more; where I shall praise his holy name forevermore. I have been taking the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for twenty or more years, I think, and it seems as if I cannot do without it. The Bible and the SIGNS are my greatest joy; for I am alone the most of my time on Sunday. But when I am alone, it is then I can have sweet meditations of God's love and mercy to me. You said at the association that you preached Christ Jesus the Lord. That is the kind of preaching that suits my case. He is the only one that is able to save poor, sinful mortals like me; for in me dwelleth no good thing. When I would do good, evil is present with me. I am nothing of myself; and if I have any right to hope in the mercy and grace of the heavenly Father, it is the gift of God, and of him alone; not for anything good that I have ever done of myself; for I have long since learned that I can do nothing of myself. It is my heart's desire and prayer to God that he may give me a clean heart to praise and adore his holy and reverend name as I ought.

Dear brethren, I have tried to pen these few lines because it was on my mind, and I could not get rid of it. I have often wanted to write, but I am so unworthy and ignorant that I cannot write like others. But I trust I have written from the depth of my heart. Please correct all errors and cast the mantle of charity over this poor scribble. From a poor, unworthy sister, if one at all,

R. A. SHORT.

ARENA, N. Y., Sept. 23, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Inclosed please find four dollars, my arrearage on our family paper. I am in my eighty-eighth year. I shall be eighty-eight if spared till November next. Your worthy and much lamented father was born the same year and month with myself. Allow me to say that I have been a subscriber to the SIGNS almost from its first issue, and have taken great comfort in perusing its able communications, penned by the gifted members of our Father's family. Fifty-five years ago I was enabled to take up my cross and follow my Redeemer into a watery grave. With my late husband I was led down into the water by Elder David Mead. I feel that I have outlived the most of those that commenced life with me, and am like an aged tree in the forest. But my trust is still in the mighty God of Jacob. I know of no other power to trust. I dare not trust a feeble arm of flesh. I feel very unworthy, but I realize that I must look away from self, to our great Mediator, the immaculate Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. As my eyesight is quite poor, I thought to have the paper discontinued; but my children say I must take it in my name as long as I live, and that when I can see to read it no longer they will read it for me. Now, as I had to write on business, I have written a few stray thoughts. If you wish to publish them, you can do so; if not, it is all the same.

Your sister in hope of eternal life,  
MRS. FRANCIS O'CONNOR.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., OCTOBER 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF G. BEEBE'S SONS.

WHO WORSHIP THE BEAST?

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE—DEAR BROTHER:—When you feel at liberty and so inclined, please give your views through the SIGNS on Revelation xiv. 9-11. Who does the third angel there represent? Are those who are punished the non-elect, or the disobedient children of God? By complying with the above request you will confer a great favor on one who indeed feels himself to be the least of all saints, if one at all. I desire to say to you that I fully indorse the doctrine advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. May the Lord enable you, and all of the writers of that dear old paper, to continue to wield "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." May God bless you all, is my prayer, for Christ's sake.

Your unworthy brother,

J. B. BUNTYN.

NEWMAN, Ga., Sept. 4, 1888.

REPLY.

"And the third angel followed him, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."—Rev. xiv. 9-12.

It is with much hesitation that we attempt to comply with the request of brother Buntyn for our views on the subject contained in the text above quoted. Not only in this solemnly sublime book of Revelation, but in all the inspired Scriptures, God has purposely hidden the holy mystery of his truth from the curious eye of carnal reason. The wise and prudent have ever sought to comprehend this hidden wisdom, but all their efforts have only resulted in taking them in their own craftiness, and turning their wisdom into manifest folly. So is the pride of man abased, and the glory of God is exalted in revealing unto babes that which is vainly sought by haughty reason.

As the request of our brother is only for our views on the subject submitted, the thoughts here given are only such as we have received, and they are presented for the consideration of our readers with no design to controvert the sentiments of any who may have understood the text as having a different application. On the contrary, we shall be gratified to receive for publication from any brother a clearer and more satisfactory elucidation of the subject, in harmony with the Scriptures. Nothing can be profitable to

the saints but that which is taught them in their experience; and that teaching is always in exact harmony with the inspired record. If the knowledge of divine truth were attained by the exercise of natural diligence and study, then there would be occasion for boasting on the part of those who would succeed in gaining such knowledge; but since the truth of God is only known by the revelation of his holy Spirit, they who have most received are under deepest obligation to confess their utter nothingness and ignorance in the unsearchable mystery of that truth. Thus the most favored apostle is not permitted to glory in the abundance of the revelations which he has received. Neither can any just complaint arise from that saint who is most deficient in understanding; since each has received the exact measure which in the wisdom of God is needful for the position assigned him in the church, which is the house of God, and the pillar and ground of the truth. All the blessings of the gospel are freely bestowed upon the subjects of electing love, while all the glory is justly ascribed to the grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. This is manifested in the understanding of the truth as given to the saints, as well as in all the perfect plan of salvation ordained in infinite wisdom.

The testimony of Jesus as recorded in this book of the Revelation, is the same great truth which is testified in all the inspired Scriptures. The peculiar manner in which the record is given in this book, has led many to regard it as more mysterious than other portions of the Bible; but the only correct understanding of any portion of the revealed word is that which is received by the direct teaching of that Spirit of truth, which takes of the things of Jesus, and shows them unto those who are taught of God. To that Spirit there is no more mystery in one portion of the divine record than in another. From the investigation of the natural mind every portion is alike unsearchably hidden. When led by the Spirit into the knowledge of the truth, all is plain and manifest to the subject of divine grace; when left to the guidance of his natural mind he cannot comprehend any word of that testimony of Jesus.

This book is declared to be "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." The whole book must therefore be inseparably united as a complete picture of that great truth which it was designed by its Author to reveal. This positive declaration must not be forgotten by those who desire to know the truth as it is testified in this record borne by the inspired servant of God. To rightly understand any portion of this book, therefore, it must be taken in the

connection in which it was placed by the direction of the angel of Jesus. In the immediately preceding context is the record of the vision of the Lamb which stood upon the mount Sion, and the company of those with him, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. It is declared of them that they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. As he led the way through great tribulation, they must also have tribulation in the world; but he has overcome the world, and has the victory to give to them. This is as certainly determined as their conflicts. It is included in that everlasting gospel which is preached by the angel flying in the midst of heaven. In all their trials they are sustained by the sure word of this testimony. The fall of Babylon is proclaimed in the preaching of this gospel, and is inseparable from it. Not only is this true in the final deliverance of the whole redeemed church of Jesus Christ, but in the individual experience of every saint it must be manifested.

By the third angel mentioned in the text, we do not understand another dispensation or period in the history of the church. It may be that in the same natural time this angel is revealed in some of the members of the church, while in other members the sweet sound of the everlasting gospel is heard in the midst of the heaven of their experience. It must be observed that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, it is written "that there should be time no longer."—Rev. x. 6. By this declaration we understand the closing of that dispensation which was given by the hand of Moses, "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."—Heb. ix. 10. Under that law there was much importance attached to times and seasons. All those carnal ordinances were blotted out when that law was fulfilled by our Lord Jesus. Since the establishment of the gospel dispensation all those times are passed away with the law which established them. On the day of Pentecost the Son of man came in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and from thenceforth he sits upon the throne of his glory, and there is no more time in his gospel kingdom. It is now the one everlasting day, which the Lord has made. The presence of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, is the light of this day, which shall never be withdrawn. As the angel of the gospel ministry does not cease to be seen flying in the midst of the heaven, so there is an everlasting proclamation of the fall of Babylon, and denunciation of her iniquities. Indeed, the gospel cannot be proclaimed without the exposure of the pollution of all that opposes the truth. This is the declaration of the fall of that Babylon which is symbolic of all the organizations of anti-christ.

The loud voice which denounces the consequences of worshiping the beast and his image, is not to be understood as merely a sound which shall be heard by the natural ear of man. The thunder of that voice is heard in the very soul of him to whom it is addressed, even though his nearest companion can hear no sound. Neither is it requisite that some mortal witness shall be prepared to testify against such a guilty man. That voice will fill the soul of the man who has thus sinned against the Lord, even when no word or action has betrayed his sin to any mortal. The worship of the beast and his image does not necessarily involve the performance of any formal rites or ceremonies. The secret thought of looking to any other source for justification save to the perfect work of Jesus, is worship ascribed to that source from which such favor is expected. In the experience of the saints any mingling of creature merit with their appeals to God for deliverance, is idolatry. This is the signification of the symbol of the beast and his image, as expressed in the text. When any man of the subjects of salvation in Christ Jesus thus worships the beastly work of his own imagination, he denies that his hope is in the finished salvation which is in the Lord Jesus. Such idolatry will be visited upon him in the sense of condemnation which is signified in the text by the declaration that he "shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God." This is that visitation of just chastening upon the disobedient subject of salvation, of which it is written that "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Those who have experienced such chastening can testify that it is indeed "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. x. 26, 27, 31. Those who have never known the bitterness of sin, may think that the doctrine of salvation by grace gives license to continue in sin; but to the true child of God the fear of the Lord is to hate evil; and by the fear of the Lord all such earnestly desire to depart from evil.—Prov. viii. 13; xvi. 6. In this experience the saints individually hear the loud voice of the third angel speaking in their heart the solemn truth declared in the text. It is in this experimental sense that the visitation of this fearful punishment upon them in their departure from the Lord, is exclusively "the patience [that is, the suffering, or chastening] of the saints."

It may be objected that this application of the text involves the doctrine that the saints are liable to be finally lost if they may be engaged in the worship of the beast and his image, as stated in our text. We do not so understand the declaration of

the angel. In the application of the subject to the experience of the saints it is to be observed that their present action does not affect their relation to God in Christ Jesus. They can never forfeit that eternal life which is hid with Christ in God, nor can any action of a sinner ever secure that vital unity with Christ which is the gift of God exclusively. The choice of God in Christ Jesus before the world began, unalterably settled that eternal salvation of all his elect people. They can neither make that election more sure by obedience to the commandments of the Lord, nor forfeit their interest in it by disobedience. In their present experience they receive the answer of a good conscience toward God in obedience, or the rod of chastening in disobedience. So David says that in keeping the statutes and judgments of the Lord there is great reward; and in his disobedience to them he testifies that "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow."—Psa. xix. 11; cxvi. 3. It was to those whom he recognized as his brethren, "beloved of God, called to be saints," that Paul wrote, saying, "Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."—Rom. viii. 12, 13. It cannot be supposed that Paul meant in this text that even living after the flesh could separate the saints from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The death which should be experienced by them in living after the flesh is that visitation of their transgressions upon them, which in our text is described as the pouring out of the wine of the wrath of God without mixture, of which all such as worship the beast and his image shall drink.

The further declaration that "He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb," is verified in the experience of every one who is turned from the worship of the Lamb to the idolatry of looking for comfort and support to the false gods of his own imagination. The torment signified by "fire and brimstone," is endured by the saint who feels the presence of the Lamb in the Lord looking upon him in his departure from the allegiance which he owes to his Redeemer. Then, like Peter, he will weep bitterly as he feels that he is "in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." It is not necessary that the terrors of eternal torment should threaten the saints in order to make them seek to follow their Lord; nor is their desire merely that they may escape hell at last. They have the Spirit of Christ in them, and that Spirit produces in them that hunger and thirst after righteousness which characterizes them as the subjects of the blessing

of God. Consequently they feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin as they realize its working in their members. Under this feeling of their own vileness they cry with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This experience is unknown to any others but those who are led by the Spirit of God.

"And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." In its application to the experience of the saints this truth is attested by every one who has been called to pass through the chastening which attends every departure from the narrow path of obedience to the doctrine and example of our Lord. The sense of condemnation and the "certain fearful looking for of judgment" is with them day and night continually, until they are delivered by the gracious word of their forgiving Lord. This suffering cannot be alleviated by the sincere efforts of loving brethren, even though they may bring the very words of inspired Scripture to sustain their suggestions of consolation. While the chastened one may recognize the riches of divine compassion contained in such expressions, they are unable to appropriate them as designed for their own relief. They can find no comfort even in the sympathy of the saints, who are to them the "holy angels." Thus "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever," and it is "in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." It is only in this experimental sense that we can understand this perpetual torment to be in the presence of the holiness of God. In the heaven of his eternal glory there can be neither smoke of torment, nor any sin with its consequent suffering and death. Hence we understand the whole of this fearful declaration to be included in the explanation given in our text. It is "the patience of the saints." To them exclusively is it given to endure the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ, and to them is confined the provision of the new covenant, in which the Lord promises to visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. They are blessed in enduring the rod of his chastening. So it is written, "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked."—Psa. xciv. 12, 13.

In the application of this text to the religious world at large we have no clear understanding. It is not claimed that what is here written embraces all the truth contained in the subject. The infinite fullness of inspired words can never be exhausted. May the Spirit of truth ever take of the testimony of Jesus,

as recorded in the Scriptures, and show unto us and all who love our Lord, and to his holy name be glory evermore. Amen.

#### CIRCULAR LETTERS.

THE letters of the Lexington and Licking Associations do not appear in the SIGNS on account of both being on the subject of the new birth; besides, the one for Licking has already been published in the number for October first, 1869.

#### MONEY ORDERS.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Will you please mention in the SIGNS that this office (Southampton) is now a money order office, and make the necessary change in the notice of our Hymn and Tune Book? All money orders payable to me should be drawn on this office.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Oct. 6, 1888.

#### LARGE HYMN BOOK FOR A DOLLAR, SIX FOR FOUR DOLLARS AND A HALF.

We have had bound in cloth, the same style as the "Editorials" or "Church History," a few hundred of our large type Hymn Books, which we will send post paid at the above prices. These books are especially adapted for aged people, or for pew racks, to be used in churches.

A SMALL ONE FOR SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS, OR SIX FOR THREE DOLLARS.

We also have the small type book bound in cloth, which we will send post paid at price stated above. Cash must always accompany the orders. Address,

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS:—Please send my SIGNS to Sunbury, Delaware County, Ohio, box 65, instead of Center Village, Delaware County, Ohio, as heretofore. Also please publish that I desire all my correspondents to address me at the above office. Sunbury is on the C., A. & C. R. R.

L. B. HANOVER.

#### CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I would say for the information of my friends that wish to know, that I am now in Michigan with my son; and as my health is some better than it was, I expect to try it here another winter, should the Lord still prolong my life. In place of Pleasant Ridge, Ohio, please direct my paper (the SIGNS) to Ludington, Mason Co., Michigan, and oblige

EVALINE C. GRIFFIS.

#### THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

WE have received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### MEMORIALS.

(By the Morgan Association, Ill.)

WHEREAS, Our heavenly Father in his inscrutable providence has seen proper to remove from us recently by death our beloved and highly esteemed brother, **Elder Wm. L. Campbell**, who had been for many years a valuable and faithful member of our associational body; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the following memorial shall be printed with the minutes of this meeting:

Elder Campbell was born in the State of Tennessee, Sept. 2d, 1812, and came to Illinois in 1830. He was for many years connected with a religious order of people, but finally became convinced by the teaching of the divine Spirit that he was a stranger to the power and glory of the christian religion; but the Lord led him finally to the banqueting house of his love, and in August, 1861, he united with the Friendship Church of Regular Baptists, and in October, 1868, he was ordained to the work of the ministry. Since then he has been actively and faithfully engaged in proclaiming the gospel of Christ far and near, and was an able defender of the faith of the gospel, and was one of our best scripturists and an able counsellor and disciplinarian. His life was so exemplary, his deportment before the church and the world so unblemished, that he exercised a valuable influence for good wherever he was known; and as a member of the Friendship Church, and of this Association, he was very dearly beloved and highly esteemed, having been for many years the Moderator of our annual sessions. Our beloved brother departed this life in Winchester, Ill., July 22d, 1888, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

*Resolved*, That it becomes us to bow in humble submission to the divine will of our Lord, believing that the deceased has gone to eternal rest.

*Resolved*, That we extend our profound sympathy to his bereaved companion, our beloved sister in Christ, and to his family.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the *Messenger of Peace* and SIGNS OF THE TIMES, requesting other papers of our religious faith and order to copy.

GILES REEDER, Clerk.

#### ORDINATIONS.

PURSUANT to a call for the ordination of brother JACKSON C. HANOVER, by the Refuge Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, situated in Harlem Township, Delaware County, Ohio, the following ordained Elders met with said church on the third Sunday in September, 1888:

Elder Thomas Swartout, of Michigan.  
From Marlborough Church—Elder L. B. Sherwood.

From Mt. Pisgah Church—Elder J. M. Strubel.

From Refuge Church—Elder L. B. Hanover.

The ordination sermon was preached by Elder Swartout.

The presbytery organized by appointing Elder Thomas Swartout Moderator, and Elder J. M. Strubel Clerk.

The Moderator called upon brother J. C. Hanover to give a relation of his christian experience, call to the ministry and doctrinal views, which he did to the entire satisfaction of the presbytery, and the ordination was proceeded with in the following order:

Prayer by Elder Sherwood.

Laying on of hands by all the presbytery.

Charge by Elder Strubel.

Admonition and exhortation by his father, Elder L. B. Hanover.

THOS. SWARTOUT, Mod.  
J. M. STRUBEL, Clerk.

MARRIAGES.

SUNDAY, June 10th, 1888, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, at the residence of Mr. James Beach, Prince William County, Va., Mr. Samuel L. Mills and Miss Julia A. Beach, both of Prince William Co., Va.

By the same, on Monday, August 20th, 1888, at the residence of the bride, Prince William Co., Va., Mr. Caleb S. Stone, of Fairfax Co., Va., and Miss Emma Ann Vermillion, of Prince William Co., Va.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I am requested to send you the following obituary for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, but I regret that the information sent me by a son of the deceased sister is not complete.

Mrs. Thesse Cain, wife of Mr. Jesse Cain, was born in the state of Tennessee, Dec. 11th, 1813, and departed this life near Plymouth, Hancock Co., Ill., Sept. 4th, 1888, leaving a devoted and affectionate husband and ten children to mourn their irreparable loss of a dear wife and mother; but they are consoled with the belief that she has exchanged a world of sin, sorrow and pain for a clime where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

Sister Cain's maiden name was Standley, and on January 7th, 1832, she was married to Jesse Cain, having come to Morgan Co., Ill., the previous year. They afterward settled in Hancock County, where she lived until called away from earth. She and brother Cain were members for many years (date not given) of Providence Church of Primitive or Old School Baptists, and were held in high esteem by the church and by their neighbors, and their house was ever open to feed and shelter their brethren and sisters, and to help the needy.

For about six months the dear sister and mother in Israel suffered beyond description, but bore her sufferings with remarkable patience and resignation, saying only a few times, "O Lord, what will become of me?" Her chief trouble seemed to be that she had to be waited on so much by her daughters and other nurses. All her children, except one, came to see her during her sufferings, although scattered through several of the western states. The children, the heart-broken husband and friends, gathered round her at four o'clock on this sad day, and saw her gently pass away from this state of suffering and death, to dwell forever, as they believe, with her Savior. A worthy woman has fallen, and may the God of all comfort resign the bereaved to his holy will.

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, Ill., Sept. 26, 1888.

DEPARTED this life in the village of Sciota, McDonough Co., Ill., Sept. 1st, 1888, John Tipton, Sr., aged eighty-two years, one month and sixteen days.

Brother Tipton was born in Ohio, July 15th, 1806, and in 1833 was united in marriage with Miss Jane Amanda Dunlap, who bore him five children, all of whom are living. In 1841 or 1842 he and his wife joined an Old School Baptist Church in Coshocton Co., Ohio, and he continued steadfast in that faith until he was removed from earth.

In the year 1847 he lost his wife, whose remains lie slumbering on the old homestead in Ohio. In 1848 he was married to Miss Margaret Lloyd, to whom were born three children, who, together with their mother, are yet living; and two of each set of the children were present at the death and burial of their venerable sire, whose kind hands faithfully administered to the earthly wants of him who had cared for them in their childhood and youth.

The deceased was until within a few years of his death a very industrious and energetic man in business, and in religious matters he was zealous and uncompromising, and ever ready to contend for the faith of the gospel; and while able to do so, he and his wife were ever ready to feed and care for the Lord's children who called on them. He had been feeble for some years, and nearly deaf, and for a few weeks he suffered greatly, but finally passed away without a struggle or a groan, from a world of sorrow and pain to that blessed clime where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying. For many years he has been a member with us; but the distance from the church and his weakness prevented him from attending of late years. I being absent from home at the time of his demise, the family called on other parties to speak on the occasion. For want of information at this writing, this notice of a beloved and faithful man of God is very imperfect, and, to me, unsatisfactory.

May the Lord bless the bereaved widow and family with supporting grace and resignation.

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, Ill., Sept. 18, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I send for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the obituary of my dear aunt, Mrs. F. L. Bagg, who died at her home in Aurora, Illinois, April 22d, 1888, in the seventy-fifth year of her age.

She made a profession of religion, I think, at about the age of sixteen years, and was baptized by the late Elder John Leland, and united with the Baptist Church in Cheshire, Berkshire Co., Mass., where I think her membership has ever remained. At the age of nineteen years she entered as a scholar Mrs. Willard's Seminary, in Troy; from whence, after a year or two of attentive study, she went to Virginia to accept the position of governess in the family of Judge Upture, where she remained two years. After returning to her home, at the request of her friends, she opened a select school for girls in Lanesborough, the home of her childhood, where she taught for several years, molding the characters and minds of her pupils in a way that has made some, at least, bright and shining lights in the world. It was at this time that she collected and published the writings and wrote the life of the late Elder John Leland, of Cheshire, a book that is at present in the hands of many readers of the SIGNS. In the year 1846 she was married to Henry Bagg, a young physician, and with him moved west, finally settling in Wauconda, Illinois, where they remained until her husband's death in 1866. The following year she with her only child, a boy of twelve years, moved to Aurora, Illinois, where they made their home until her death.

She was a firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church, and has been a constant reader of the SIGNS for nearly forty years. Hers was a life so deep and broad in christian experience, and so replete in all its virtues, so helpful to all who had the pleasure of knowing her intimately, that any tribute that can be paid to her memory seems entirely inadequate.

Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Wauconda, by the side of her late husband.

M. L. PETTIBONE.

HEBRON, Ill., Sept. 30, 1888.

DIED—May 3d, 1888, sister Ellen J. Phillips, wife of brother Isaac Phillips, of Nicholson, Pa., aged thirty-six years and a few months.

Her maiden name was Gibson. For several years she was a zealous Methodist, contending earnestly for the doctrine preached by them, a conditional salva-

tion, and argued with all her powers to prove that sinners were free agents, and could accept or reject the offered salvation; but the Lord in his own good time showed her that she was a lost and helpless sinner, without hope and without God in the world, and without the mercy and grace of God eternally lost. At a time unexpected Jesus appeared unto her as her Savior, her mourning was turned into joy, and she was enabled to rejoice in a good hope through grace. Now her theme was salvation by grace, and grace alone, renouncing *in toto* the doctrine she had formerly advocated so strongly. Several years ago she united with the Old School Baptist Church of Caroline, in Tompkins Co., N. Y. About two years previous to her death her membership had been with the Abington Church, in Pennsylvania, of which she was a worthy member until removed by death. She leaves a lonely husband and friends, with the church, to mourn their loss; but we feel that for her to die was gain. She was anxious to go home, and we believe that she is now enjoying in all its fullness that which she enjoyed in part while here below. Absent from the body, present with the Lord. May the God of all grace comfort, sustain and strengthen her dear companion and friends in this dispensation of his providence.

Elder Charles Bogardus preached a very comforting discourse on the occasion of the funeral to the friends assembled.

D. M. VAIL.

WAVERLY, N. Y.

DIED—At his residence near Circleville, Pickaway Co., Ohio, Mr. J. G. Ross, in the fifty-seventh year of his age.

The deceased was the husband of sister Ross, who survives him, and also three sons and five daughters, one daughter having preceded him to the spirit land some ten months ago, whose obituary you published at the time. He never joined any church, but the writer of this notice has talked with him on the subject of a precious Savior, and he was firm in the faith that if not saved by grace he was lost. He told me that what he once loved he now hated, and what he once hated he now loved; so I feel that he has joined the church triumphant. Sister Ross has lost a kind companion, and we have lost a good neighbor; but we hope our loss is his eternal gain. The afflicted family have the good feelings of a large circle of friends and acquaintances, and the confidence of their brethren. May the Lord be near them, and their stronghold in time of trouble. The funeral took place at the Ebenezer Church, September 14th, 1888, with some remarks from the writer to a very large and attentive congregation, who assembled to pay their last tribute of respect to the departed.

R. W. PETERS.

CIRCLEVILLE, Ohio, Sept. 23, 1888.

DIED—In Richmond, Missouri, at her son's, T. D. Woodson, Friday morning, Sept. 14th, 1888, sister Huldah A. Woodson, Elder W. T. Brown officiating on the funeral occasion.

She was born in Rockingham Co., Va., Jan. 14th, 1801, and moved with her parents when quite young to Barren Co., Ky. She was married to my eldest brother, Robert S. Woodson, in 1819, and settled with him in Woodsonville, Ky. She was left a widow in 1839, with six children and but little means; yet with her superior judgment and energy brought up and educated them equal to any in our society. She was a very delicate woman, and yet retained all her faculties seventeen years above the allotted time to man. She united with the Old School Baptist Church in Woodsonville, Kentucky, in 1819; and when the split took place she with her husband cast her lot with the Anti-Missionaries, holding firm to the last salvation by grace. Her son, T. D. Woodson,

moved her to Missouri some thirty years ago, where she has been tenderly and affectionately cared for.

A. L. WOODSON.

WOODSONVILLE, Ky., Oct. 1, 1888.

DIED—In North Berwick, Maine, Aug. 15th, 1888, Mrs. Annie Quint.

She was in her ninety-third year, and the widow of brother Daniel Quint, who died about five years ago. She was an Old School Baptist in belief, and had a hope that she was a child of God, but for fear that she might be deceived, never had strength to unite with the church. She was a kind companion, mother and neighbor. We believe that she has gone to her eternal rest. She has left three children and grandchildren, with many relatives who loved her, to mourn.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

ASSOCIATIONAL.

THE next session of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association is appointed with the church at Church Creek, Dorchester Co., Md., to begin on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1888, and continue three days.

Brethren and friends coming by the cars will leave Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, on Tuesday, at 7:27 a. m., and change cars at Seaford for Cambridge. All coming from Salisbury or other stations will also change cars at Seaford. Those coming by way of Baltimore will take the steamer which leaves piers three and four, Light Street, at 9:00 p. m. on Tuesday, for Cambridge. We were disappointed in the steamer we expected to come to Woolford on Tuesday.

We are looking with pleasure to the time when we shall welcome our dear kindred in Christ and our friends.

SUSIE L. WOOLFORD.

THE Fishers River Primitive Baptist Association will hold its next session with the church at Stuart's Creek, one mile southwest of Mt. Airy, N. C., commencing on Friday before the fourth Sunday in October.

We invite the brethren, especially ministers, to visit us.

Those coming by rail will be met at Mt. Airy on Thursday evening.

YEARLY MEETINGS.

PLEASE publish through the SIGNS that the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley, Ulster Co., N. Y., will hold her yearly or two days meeting, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the first Sunday in November next (3d and 4th). Trains going west toward the place will be met at Olive Branch on the day before at 3:25 p. m. and 8:22 a. m. Trains coming from the west at Shokan, at 4:32 p. m. and 10:29 a. m. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth.

By order of the church.

J. MATTHEWS, Acting Clerk.

OUR Yearly Meeting is appointed to be held at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., to begin on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1888, at 2 o'clock p. m.

Those coming through and from Philadelphia will take the B. & O. R. R. at Twenty-Fourth and Chestnut Streets, on Saturday, at 10 o'clock, for Landinburg. Six of the number can get off at Hockessin and go with brother Dennison; the balance to Landinburg. Those coming through and from Baltimore can take either the P. W. & R. R. or the B. & O. R. R., so as to get to Newark by 12 o'clock on Saturday. Those coming up the Delaware R. R. will ticket to Wilson, on Delaware City R. R., and come to my house. Come and see us.

JOS. L. STATON.

The Old School Baptist Church of Schoharie, N. Y., will hold her Yearly Meeting, if the Lord will, on Wednesday and Thursday after the fourth Sunday in October, 1888, at 10 o'clock a. m. each day, at her house on Schoharie Hill. All who love the truth are cordially invited to be present. Trains will be met at Howe's Cave on Tuesday.

G. W. GUERNSEY, Clerk.

### TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

A two days meeting is to be held with the Otego Church, at Osborn Hollow, Broome Co., N. Y., Oct. 17th and 18, 1888. The place of the meeting is about ten miles east from Binghamton, N. Y., on the line of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company's R. R. The friends will stop at Osborn Hollow, where they will be met and cared for. A cordial invitation is extended to all who love the truth.

By order of the church.

CORBIN SCUDDER, Clerk.

A YEARLY or two days meeting is appointed to be held with the Old School Baptist Church at Waverly, Tioga Co., N. Y., on Tuesday and Wednesday after the third Sunday in October. We hope to see a goodly number of brethren and friends present. They will be met at the the depots of the D., L. & W. R. R., L. V. R. R. and N. Y., L. E. & W. R. R., on Monday p. m. and Tuesday a. m. The place of meeting is about one mile from the depots.

D. M. VAIL, Pastor.

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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1888. NO. 21.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### PSALM CIV. 3.

"He maketh the clouds his chariot."

[The following substance of a discourse delivered by the late Joseph Irons, at Camberwell, England, nearly fifty years ago, was forwarded us by a brother, with the request that we give it a place in the columns of the SIGNS.—ED.]

BELOVED:—If any earthly king were to drive up to your door in a chariot, and that, too, for the purpose of conferring royal favors and honors, would you lose sight of the king, and disregard his coming, because you disliked the color of his chariot? Yet such is the conduct of the subjects of the King of kings very frequently. If he comes to them in his cloudy chariot, they almost deny his coming at all. If he comes to them in a cloudy chariot, they seem as if they would shrink from his presence, and disown his favor, because they disapprove of the gloomy appearance of the chariot. Rather let us disregard the chariot, and look for him who rides in it.

It was just thus, you know, with the disciples who went up to the top of the mount with our blessed Lord. They were mightily delighted with his appearance, while "his raiment was white as the light, and his face shone as the sun," and his glory burst forth upon them—as pleased as you and I are in the full enjoyment of his presence; but "while he yet spake, behold, a cloud overshadowed them," and then "they feared." They liked the appearance of the King, but they did not like his chariot; and yet this is the very method that God takes to make his approach to the hearts of his people. "He maketh the clouds his chariot."

These words were very sweetly and powerfully brought to my mind about the middle of the week that is past, while I was using all the battling efforts of my poor worm-like energies to break through the clouds that encompassed me. I knew not when they would disperse, nor how dense they would become, and was almost beginning to think that, like the disciples, I should be "sore afraid," if not overwhelmed, when these words dropped upon my spirit with peculiar sweetness, "He maketh the clouds his chariot." I said, "Come, Lord, however deep the darkness, however cloudy the day, however cloudy the providence, however cloudy the experience; only do thou come, and I will find no more fault with the chariot. The moment I get a glimpse

of the King's countenance I shall forget to think any more about the chariot."

You will easily perceive from these cursory remarks what I mean to be the drift of the sermon this morning. I mean to preach to myself, God willing; and if any of my hearers can snatch a morsel for themselves, they are welcome to it. I pray God to apply it to their hearts.

O who can tell, except those who have been in them, the clouds of distress that the Lord's people have to pass through and are the subjects of? But yet, bear in mind, they are the Lord's chariot. In order to open this a little, I shall first of all invite your attention to God's method of coming to his people; secondly, the object of his coming thus to visit them; and then, thirdly, the dignity put upon us by such a visit. I am sure we should think it an honor conferred upon us if an earthly monarch stopped his chariot at our door, especially if he made it his special errand in coming from his throne, and such is our God's dealing by us.

First of all, a word or two upon the chariot—the method of his approach. I mention first those which are most deeply felt—the clouds of spiritual convictions, thickening by the sentence of a broken law coming over the conscience. I defy any human being to give a description, or anything like a description, of this chariot (which by the by is always God's own), save and except those who have had experimentally to do with it. There are a great many persons who seem to have glided very gently into their religion, learning it from a catechism, receiving it from a mother's instruction or from a father's counsels; but to have nothing more than this is to know nothing about experimental and vital godliness. When God first comes to the sinner's heart, be sure of it, his chariot is a cloud; and the mind of that poor sinner will be overwhelmed with a consciousness of his ruin, his deadness, his barrenness, his rebellion against God, his desperate corruptions, his pollution, his defilement, his hell-deserving condition. Have you ever been in that cloud? I fear there are many who can talk of being in the sunshine of spiritual enjoyments, that never knew anything about this method of God's coming in their souls.

If I were to look back some five and thirty years or more, upon the first approaches which Jehovah made to my soul by his holy Spirit's over-

whelming power, and recall to mind and recount in your hearing the overwhelming sorrows, the fearful forebodings, the deep convictions, the groanings and sighings for deliverance and mercy, the fear of death, the fear of judgment, the fear of the curse, the fear to live and the fear to die—they were cloudy days, before any glimpse was obtained of the preciousness of Christ, before the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings. The soul is brought to feel, under these deep convictions, and sometimes to express, that there is not such another wretch upon earth—not such another vile sinner in God's creation. Overwhelmed by the cloud; and some poor legalist will set to work and tell him he must repent. They might as well tell him to melt the rock. He cannot produce a single tear. They will come and tell him he must pray; and he can fall prostrate upon his knees, and utter some words, but he can no more pray than he can fly. The closet is cloudy. He comes and hears "the words of eternal life," and the tempter whispers that it is for others, and not for him. There is a cloud over the sanctuary, and he cannot read one letter of his name in the book of life.

Moreover, to this deep conviction of sin, bowing down the soul, is added the sentence of the law, "Pay me that thou owest." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The soul is brought to discover that the holy law of God demands sinless, perfect obedience, and that all his life is sinful, perfect rebellion; that a wider contrast cannot exist than between the demand of the holy law and the life of the sinful rebel. O how he is beclouded and overwhelmed! No sight of Jesus for the present. He sinks in despondency; he fears as he enters the cloud. But pause a moment, if there be such an one here this morning, under these deep convictions, and under Sinai's covenant. It is Jehovah's chariot. He is coming forth to thee in mercy; and though his first approaches may seem very terrible, it is the chariot thy God rides upon. The devil rides in a chariot of carnal ease; but when God comes into a sinner's heart the clouds are his chariot, upon which he rides.

But God's method of coming to a sinner upon his cloudy chariot must be followed, further, in the obscurity of his dispensations. It is comparatively easy to describe the convic-

tions of a christian's experience when he is first awakened, and equally easy to describe the triumphs of faith when they are realized—a believing hold of Christ, by which the child of God says triumphantly, He is my Lord and my God; but there is a feature of experience between these which it is not so easy to describe—a feature which is always obscurity, and in which the child of God, after having obtained some glimpses of Calvary, and some scriptural views of God's method of saving sinners, is utterly at a loss to decide. Am I right, or am I wrong? Is my religion carnal or spiritual? Does it consist merely of the moving of natural passion, or is it the Spirit's operation? This is a point of obscurity that has puzzled thousands of the children of God, and thousands of ministers, too.

O the importance of viewing God in his chariot here, when the tempter may be permitted to raise a cloud of obscurity, and question every comfort that has been enjoyed, and question every Scripture that has been applied, and question every prayer that has been offered, and insinuate that it is all fleshly and all carnal. While under the feelings of obscurity and mystery, the coldness in personal experience, the seasons of neglect, the instances of rebellion, and even the very doubts that have been injected by the prince of darkness, serve to thicken the cloud and obscure the experience, until the christian is obliged to say, I am a very paradox and a mystery to myself. No wonder that the psalmist said, after knowing the Lord for many years, "I am a wonder unto many;" and surely the greatest wonder of all to himself. He is a puzzle to himself. A moment's glow of ardent desire, and an hour's cold, chilly, worldly carnality set over against it. A ray of light from some Scripture darting into the soul, and a long night of darkness, in which the individual sinks almost into a reckless carelessness, immediately to succeed it. An attempt to take a grasping hold of some promise, immediately followed by a repulsive putting away of the very comforts God showers down in his word. An abhorrence of sin deeply rooted in the soul, and tempted almost every hour to some abominable indulgence, through the devil's wiles. Warm with love to God, yet cold as ice in acts of devotion and in hearing his word. Living upon his body and blood by faith, yet wandering, and careless, and carnal, almost

even as the worldling. Such is the mystery. What an obscurity! With evidences enough to satisfy ten thousand angels, and yet, in the face of them all, doubting whether the soul possesses one. Longing to grasp the promises, as "Yea and Amen in Christ," and yet more ready to believe Satan's lies than to credit the word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What is this? What is going on? It is the Lord's chariot. I grant it is cloudy experience; but the cloud is only a flying vapor, and shall soon pass away. The Lord is coming in this chariot for the very purpose of emptying the sinner of self, and laying him low in the dust.

I think I have seen, and I know I have felt in my own soul's experience, that it is a hard thing to be emptied of self. Many of the Lord's family go on for years in the divine life, and get many enjoyments, and advance much in knowledge, and love, and faith, and almost to assurance, and after all detect that there is more of self in their religion than they ever thought. And what is the result? It raises a cloud. The religion that they have is not gone, for it cannot disappear—it is a deathless principle; but the old man must be laid low in the dust, the flesh must be crucified, and therefore God comes in his chariot to "overturn, overturn, overturn, until he come, whose right it is."

I do not expect that any will understand me this morning but those who have been in the cloud themselves. I have, and I know what it is; and I question much if any of my hearers know more about it than I have been made to experience in the week that is past. If it had not been for this one text dropping into my experience to make me look for the Lord's coming, I know not whether I should have been able to appear among you this morning; for this text upheld me, "He maketh the clouds his chariot." So that they do not fly hither and thither by chance; but as he who rides in a chariot very frequently drives, and guides it where he pleases, so our God rides upon the clouds, and directs their course, and they move in the way he chooses, and they can be no heavier than he appoints.

I pass on to mark that when this is got over, in after experience this obscurity and darkness frequently break in again and again. Nights and days succeed each other; winters and summers go on. We did not expect, when the bright, warm sun drew us out into our garden on Tuesday, that it would be followed by the deep snow of yesterday; and so it is frequently with the Lord's family. When they get fellowship with him, and have the seal of forgiveness fastened upon their hearts, they think "the winter is over and gone;" but we have not got into a cloudless sky yet. It is a cloudy world, and we are to expect darkness and light, night and day, contending with one another in our experience

as long as we are in the wilderness. One thought more here. The mysteries of godliness and the mysteries of providence (I may put them both together) are clouds, and God makes chariots of them. "Great is the mystery of godliness;" and it is the cloud which God sees fit to make his chariot, in the glorious doctrine of his eternal grace, that makes them so offensive to carnal minds, and in consequence of the cloud reason rejects them. Would you know, beloved, what is the quintessence of infidelity? If I tell you, and God inclines you to believe it, you will say there are thousands of infidels that you once thought were christians. The quintessence of infidelity is the attempt to bring divine things down to a human standard; or, in plain words, the attempt to bring spiritual realities within the compass of carnal capacities; or, if you will have it in plainer words still, and more scriptural, it is the setting up of the great goddess Reason, as the Diana, whom all are to fall down and worship; to bring the doctrine of grace, the doctrine of salvation, the doctrine of the Bible, to the standard of a human tribunal, to the test of poor, fallen, blind, carnal reason. All those who pass for christians, and christian ministers, too, who make the reasoning powers of man the test of gospel doctrine, the understanding of man and contending for points, are infidels to a man. God will not have it so. "Great is the mystery of godliness." Take as a sample the first thing you find in that passage, "God manifest in the flesh." Can you find a man whose natural reasoning powers can comprehend how Deity could be manifest in humanity—how the glorious, self-existent Jehovah could inhabit a body like yours and mine, and constitute (being God and man) one person, one precious and glorious Christ? It is beyond reason; it is above the powers of man; it is the great "mystery of godliness." But to deny it is to shut up yourself in unbelief; to deny it is to deny the existence of a God. Now, as the soul passes on, it comes to a multitude of mysteries in God's truth. For instance, he cannot bring within his reasoning powers why Jacob was loved and Esau hated. He tries long to square it with his little puny notions of the justice of God and the goodness of God; how he came to raise up Pharaoh; why Ishmael was cast out and Isaac beloved; why Peter, with all his cursing and swearing, was pardoned and saved; and Judas, with the temptation of money, "went to his own place." There are mysteries here to which the child of God is brought to bow down; and in all these Jehovah is carrying on the purposes of his love, and in his chariot "riding prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness."

Then mark the mysteries of his providence, clouds which we cannot disperse. You may look at the

providential dealings of God with our own long favored country, and then extend your view to the whole of his creation, and every part of the world; and then, after taking this extensive glance, bring back your thoughts to personal history, and take merely the little circle in which you individually move; and what numberless questions there are to perplex us. Why is it that there is an individual striving all his lifetime, with apparently honest and upright efforts and endeavors, till his very strength is exhausted and gone, and always "against wind and tide," with everything frowning upon him; and in the case of another, who apparently has taken no pains, everything seems to fall into his lap, as if by the peculiar favor of heaven? Mark again the providences of God relating to sickness and bereavement, and what a mystery, what a cloud, that there should be individuals left on earth, apparently useless, burdens upon society, racked with pain (even possessors of grace, too), utterly helpless, without even a hope of recovery, lingering on in that state year after year; and others, active, vigorous, spiritual, useful, perhaps engaged in the work of the ministry, suddenly snatched away and carried home, and perhaps when in a position where it almost seemed to us as if we could not do without them. It is a mystery—a cloud; but the Lord is coming to his church in all this. And when he comes into a household, who can comprehend him, taking away the stay and the staff, the head and the governor, the father of a family, as in the case of our friend, when perhaps the infant of a day, upon whom vast expense and labor must be bestowed, is spared? It appears cloudy and mysterious to us, and we know not how to reconcile these things. We must come to this point, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

Let this suffice, then, upon this part of the subject, that whatever clouds we may be involved in, if we are christians, if we are really children of God, God is coming to us. It is his method of approach; and who can tell the amount of mercies he brings with him in this chariot? One of our poets has this language,

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercies, and shall break  
In blessings on your head."

Often has this been the case.

We will pass on to notice the object of Jehovah's coming thus to visit his people, though he may come in cloudy chariots. The first thing we may mention is that he comes to carry out and accomplish the secret purposes of his grace. Who would have thought of his raising up Moses in the method he did? He came in a cloudy chariot to effect the purpose of his grace. He had determined of old that Moses should be the leader

and the emancipator of the tribes of Israel from Egyptian bondage; and Satan, in order to prevent this, put it in the heart of Pharaoh to destroy all the male children. But instead of being destroyed, Moses shall be put in the bulrushes; and though it is only with the expectation that the next tide will carry him away, saving him from Pharaoh's murderous hand, and saving his mother from seeing his destruction, this is God's cloudy chariot, and he shall be rescued by Pharaoh's daughter, and brought up better than his own mother could bring him up. God was coming to him upon the waters; and though the dispensation appeared inevitable destruction, God's salvation was in it. Herod's was just a parallel case. The child Jesus was to be born, who was to bruise the serpent's head, and to be the Savior of the church. Satan knew the time was up, for he can read prophecy and calculate dates; and therefore he put it into Herod's blood-thirsty mind to send forth an edict to destroy all the children under two years old. Not that he cared about the other children, whether they were saved or not. It was Jesus he aimed at. A cloudy scene—a cloudy chariot; but God was in it, for the very purpose of fulfilling prophecy, that he might be preserved.

But here I think it will be sufficient for you and for me to mark the events which brought us under the sound of the gospel, when it took possession of our hearts; and were they not cloudy? It would not be decorous for me to recapitulate the history of my own experience on this point; suffice it to say that the eternal purpose and decree of the most high God had fixed upon Thames Street for my birthplace, and Alphonsus Gunn for my spiritual instructor, as an instrument in the hand of God. It could not possibly be otherwise; but the parties were as far off, as unknown to each other, as unlikely to come together, as I am at this moment to go to China, and I am sure that is not very likely. But God sent cloudy dispensations, and some of them very trying; and so the preacher and hearer came to the to carry out his designs. Everything on earth seemed to conspire to prevent it; but God said, I have got into my chariot, and I will ride forth to accomplish the purpose of my love.

Take another view of apostolic days. God's purpose and design concerning Paul after his conversion (passing over that) was that he should preach the gospel at Rome, even in Caesar's household, and there plant a church. Everything seemed against it. I am sure the poor disciples could not find the money to send him there as a missionary; and how is it to be done? God sends his cloudy chariot again, and puts into it forty murderous horses. What! to draw God's chariot? Yes; and they determine to take away his life before they eat or drink. The devil

never meant he should go to Rome; and if he had been brought up before the council again, or left in prison, we cannot conceive how he could have got there. But God says he must go; and at the appointed day he must land at Puteoli, and proceed to Appii Forum, and go on to Rome. Everything had seemed to threaten his destruction. There was a fierce conspiracy against his life; but God was in the cloudy chariot, preparing for him an escort to Rome, that he might preach the gospel there. I might multiply instances here, but I forbear; only, beloved, never distrust him because you do not like the color of the chariot in which he rides.

But while he comes to effect the purposes of his love, see them carried out in taking possession of the hearts of his own, and carrying them home to glory. In both instances he generally comes in his cloudy chariot.

First, in taking possession of their hearts. O how many have been the instances in which the very things that have appeared the most unlikely have been the instruments in finding out God's own. I shall never forget that at the very moment when my godly father was weeping over my supposed ruin, God was in that cloudy chariot, taking possession of me for his own. He was never known before, but now the period had arrived. The claim was from eternity, the name was in the book of life, the date could not be altered, the instrument was appointed, but all was cloudy that led to it. I have mentioned the cloud of experience already; but bear with me while I just say that whatever distress and sorrow and anxiety are created, either in the person passing through this cloud, or in those that behold, God's purpose can never be frustrated. He has determined it, and he will say, Let my son go, that he may serve me.

Look again for a moment, I pray you, at the cloudy chariot which takes his people home. I grant that there are instances in grace, such as we have witnessed in nature, in which a cloud suddenly bursts forth into a flame. So it was with Elijah, who was taken up to glory in a chariot, not of cloud, but of fire; and I think that may fitly represent what we sometimes call triumphant deaths, when the love of Jesus is in full blaze in the soul; when all the wood and hay and stubble are burned up, and the man is completely disentangled from the things of time; when the brightness of eternal bliss seems to meet the departing spirit, and the very hallelujahs of heaven to warble upon the tongue before it quits its clay tenement; when the ransomed soul, made by omnipotent grace to partake of much of heaven upon earth, seems almost to shout the hosannahs of glory before it passes over. This I call going home in a chariot of fire; but for the more part God comes and brings his children home in a cloud. For the more part the family is cloudy, the circle in

which they move is cloudy, and sometimes even their own souls are cloudy until the very last; but, beloved, it is God's chariot. I know it comes to take those we think we can least spare, and we are ready to exclaim, Lord, take any one but this; spare me my wife, spare me my husband, whatever thou dost take; spare me my child, spare me my brother, spare me my pastor. We cling the more to them as he seems to be taking the very objects that are most dear to us. But no, says God, I am come in my chariot to take them; their crown is ready, their mansion is prepared, their seat must be immediately occupied, their harp is put in full tune, the dear Redeemer is seeking the satisfaction for the travail of his soul, there seems a chasm in the crown royal of the Mediator, which must be filled up by this precious jewel, and it must be his eternal ornament before the throne. Notwithstanding all that may becloud the church and becloud the family, Jehovah is come to take home his own. I beseech you, beloved, who mourn over bereaving providences, think much of this: it is but the Father's chariot, sent to bring home those whom you would (I had almost said unkindly) detain longer out of the mansions of bliss.

My mind feels inclined to rove a little here upon other suppositions. O what clouds have surrounded Zion when God has been taking away his faithful heralds! I am the more inclined to dwell a moment or two upon this topic, because during the quarter of a century that it has been my privilege and delight to dispense God's truth among you, I have witnessed so many of the heralds of truth taken home, and leaving Zion beclouded. Verily she is beclouded now; for I see not the Elishas raised up instead of the Elijahs; I see not the Timothys in place of the Pauls; therefore I cannot but look at it as a cloudy chariot, in which the Lord is bringing home his faithful servants. I could not help recounting, as I sat at home, sixteen or seventeen of the largest assemblies of christians meeting in London, since I have known it, from whom have been removed faithful pastors of considerable eminence, and every one of those churches has been under a cloud ever since; and sometimes (do not think me vain) I have apprehended that a cloud might prevail even in Grove Chapel, when he sends his chariot to bring me home. Paul seemed to look forward to the same thing. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." How solemn was the admonition of Peter, when, "knowing that shortly he must put off this tabernacle," he expressed his anxious concern that after his decease the truth he had proclaimed might be had in remembrance; and this is often the feeling

and desire of my soul. But let this cheer our hearts, that in whatever way Jehovah comes, it is to bring his own to glory, or to call them by the operation of his grace and train them up for glory.

One thought more upon this part of the subject. When Jehovah thus comes in his cloudy chariot it is to hold communion with his people on earth. What! I hear the christian exclaim, this cloudy week that has gone, this trial that I have scarcely got through, this cloudy experience in which I have doubted even the existence of grace—is all this to be succeeded by communion with my Lord, and may I expect another smile from his countenance? Why, I have been saying, "Is his mercy clean gone forever?" I have been supposing he would "be favorable no more." Pause, beloved; "charge not God foolishly." Only wait his time, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away." Thy Beloved is coming again, though it may be in a cloudy chariot, to hold communion with thee. As sure as he has ever held a moment's communion with thee in thy life, he cannot, he will not, alter his mind; and therefore "though the vision tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, and will not tarry."

O how blessed the moments (I have known this, beloved) when the breaking of the thick, dense clouds gives but a ray of spiritual light; when some promise, bursting through the darkness of christian experience, brings a dawn of expectation into the mind; when a sight of Calvary, a view of the transfixed limbs, the pierced side and heart of Christ, applied to the conscience, opens again that blessed intercourse, that delightful communion, often enjoyed before with a precious Christ. Liberty of prayer is bestowed, a spirit of grace and supplication is poured out, heaven commences upon earth, and the soul exclaims, "It is the voice of my beloved; behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills;" and, we may add, riding in his chariot. I think I recollect that somewhere dear old Dr. Hawker, referring to the afflictions and trials and distresses and clouds of the Lord's children, thanks God for them after this manner: I had not known the blessedness of his visits, but for the trial with which he was pleased to afflict me; I had not known the joy of victory, but for the severity of sharp conflict; I had not known the brightness of the meridian sun so well, if it had not been for the clouds and darkness that preceded it. So that even the chariot itself, cloudy as it is, becomes valuable, because the presence of the King, as he looks out of the windows, is more precious to the soul, from all around him being so dark. Yea, "clouds and darkness may be round about him," but "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne."

I hasten now to the third particu-

lar, the dignity put upon us by the Lord Jesus, though he comes in a chariot of clouds. He disappoints all our carnal hopes, cuts off all our false expectations, lays our idols low in the dust, strips us of all our vain, self-conceit, makes us feel our poverty and emptiness, and leaves us at his footstool, waiting, expecting, till he comes; and what then? Why, four things I will just notice in the dignity he puts upon us: decision, oneness, wealth, and negotiation.

When God comes to us, though it be in a cloudy way, it is to effect decision. I do not know anything more lamentable in the present day, in the professing church of the living God, than the want of decision. The great bulk of professors can be anything and everything, according to the company they are in, and change their color and shape in all manner of ways, until it is a matter of doubt whether they have any religion at all. O for more decision! I believe that God frequently visits his people with cloudy dispensations and dark and trying things, for the express purpose of bringing them to decision, that it may be known who are on the Lord's side and who on Baal's. There are three features of experience that I am very anxious to have established in the minds of my hearers, as well as in my own soul. I want, first of all, decision between carnal and spiritual things, the most important of all; that there should not be a parleying, a compromising, a trimming, a diluting, and so obscuring the brightest features of our holy religion for fear of giving offense, but that there should be a decided attachment to Jesus ("This is my Beloved and my Friend"); a decided and firm distinction from the world, coming out from them and being separate for God. Then I want, secondly, decision of doctrine, that shall bring the soul to discover clearly that salvation is all of grace from first to last, and to abandon with contempt everything that infringes in the smallest degree upon this. No ifs and peradventures; none of the middle roads of Mr. Fuller and Mr. Baxter (neutrals are always shot at by both parties); but just such decision as Paul's, "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." I call upon my hearers this morning, in the name of the eternal God, to decide, as regards their doctrinal views, whether they will have salvation by grace or salvation by works. It is impossible to have it half by each; you must have it as God's free gift in his blessed Son, "without money and without price," or you must not have it at all. But then, still further, when the soul by God's visits is brought to decision in character and doctrine, the next decision I want is that of experience; such a decision as enabled the psalmist to exclaim, "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my

buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." I wonder where I am to look for christians that dare affirm these "mys;" that are come to a point, and have the thing so settled by Jehovah's own mark upon the soul that they are just perfectly indifferent about living or dying. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." To stay on earth for a season, or to go to-morrow or to-day, is just left to his pleasure. A holy settlement of matters between God and the soul; a "setting the house in order." Where are the persons that are brought to decision like this? But when God comes to effect this three fold decision in our hearts, I am sure we shall not care much about the chariot; there will be such a dignity put upon us that we shall praise him forever and ever.

This will be followed by oneness sweetly enjoyed. When he comes, he comes to say, "I am thy salvation." He comes to carry out the design of his own prayer to God the Father, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us;" and to stablish and settle in the hearts of his people the sweet and abiding consciousness of covenant union, and vital union, indissoluble union, between God and the soul. O what a dignity! Why, beloved, the fact is that he is the Bridegroom coming in his cloudy chariot to marry his bride—it is a nuptial day; and surely if there be any real love between the bride and Bridegroom, there will be no great quarreling about the chariot. He comes to manifest the oneness—to show to the souls of his people that he is their Lord, their Savior, their Husband, and to enable them to reply, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." So that when Jesus opens his heart to the believer, and when the believer opens his heart to Jesus, there is a melting of heart to heart, a oneness of spirit, of sentiment, of affection, of object, between Jesus and his beloved bride; and this is the object and purpose of his coming, to dignify his church by a marriage union.

Once more. When Jehovah thus comes, though it be in a cloudy chariot, it is to bring wealth to his saints, to bring them the riches of his grace, the earnest of the riches of his glory. By Christ Jesus they were brought down from glory, they were put into the hearts of the Lord's people, who therefore, if poor in this world, were rich in faith and heirs of a kingdom. Again, who would find fault with the chariot, when the Bridegroom is not only coming to marry his poor, wretched, indigent, outcast, undone bride, but to bring wealth to her, all the stores of his covenant, all the riches of his grace, all the abundance of his merits, all the blessedness of his promises, all the privileges of his church, all the prospects of his everlasting glory? So that our glorious Christ, coming thus in his cloudy chariot to his church, comes to enrich his bride,

and make her dignified and glorious to all eternity.

One thought more and I close. When God thus comes to his people, though it be in a cloudy chariot, it is that negotiation may be opened and maintained, until all their hopes are consummated. Ah, I have to tell you a secret here, beloved, and if it exposes myself I cannot help it. When Jehovah's people grow lax in prayer, or cold in affection, or carnal in desires, the chariot shall be a little more cloudy, the dispensations of his providence a little more dark, the hidings of his face a little more dense, and sorrow upon sorrow, and care upon care, and trial upon trial, are frequently employed to stir up the spirit of prayer in the hearts of God's people. I have felt it so, and have found out the blessedness of being driven to the throne of grace, when all the drawings have failed for a time; driven there with an errand I could carry nowhere else, when (shame on me!) even the drawings of his grace seemed not sufficient to keep up the sacred and holy negotiation.

O how my soul longs after perpetual negotiation with God, to live in communion with heaven, to live in a holy correspondence with Deity! But sure I am that when God answers prayer for this very purpose, it is frequently done in a cloud, frequently done in some dark dispensation, frequently done in some soul trial, or some external calamity, or some fierce temptation, or some cruel persecution. O how gracious and kind is our covenant God, that he will answer prayer, that he will open and maintain negotiation between our souls and himself, even though it is often done by his coming in a cloud!

Gather up, beloved, these fragments of remarks into this one little lesson: My God, I see, is set upon my good; my God is determined upon visiting me again and again. I wait for him, and look for him, and long for him; and though he may come in the clouds, and the clouds may be thick and dense and multiplied, yet I will wait for him and look for him. He is faithful to his word, faithful to his promise, faithful to his Son, faithful to answer the expectations he has inspired. Come, Lord, with clouds or smiles, with blessings or crosses (no, they are blessings); only come. Let me but hear thy voice, see thy face, enjoy the tokens of thy love. Choose thine own chariot, only come and visit my soul with thy salvation.

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NOVEMBER 28, 1887.

ELDER BENTON JENKINS—MY DEAR UNKNOWN BROTHER:—More than a year ago I stayed over night with a dear sister in the Lord, who, when she is able, sits under your ministry. From her I learned that she often sat in heavenly places with her Redeemer, while she listened to the heavenly free grace gospel truth that came from your lips. In telling me

the substance of the sermon you delivered on the previous Sunday, I felt an indescribable love toward you.

Thus you see, my dear brother, that when you preached that discourse the Holy Spirit not only designed it should be made a blessing to the afflicted sister, but also to a poor, helpless sinner who has never gone beyond the prayer of the publican, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." We were born and brought up in the same part of old England, where we had the opportunity of hearing such men of God as Warburton, Tiptaft, Philpot, Gadsby and Goodwin. Coming to this country more than forty years ago, we found, and have continued to find, a mixture of good and bad coming from the lips of the priests and their hearers. During these many years we have felt very lonely, save at such times as it has pleased the Holy Spirit to give us a faith's view of the death and suffering of Christ, and of the fruits of his sufferings. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." O the blood, the precious, atoning, efficacious blood of Christ, has been, is now, and ever will be, the ground of our rejoicing.

Not one good and perfect thing can we find in ourselves, though the searching be ever so diligent. On the contrary, the searching only lays open the vileness of our nature, and makes us exclaim, Nothing but the everlasting, unchangeable, electing love of our covenant God could have chosen us, and in time redeemed us by the blood of the Son, which is effectually wrought within us by the Holy Ghost, and we made to see and feel that we could not save ourselves, either in whole or in part; and from our hearts we are made to feel, lost or saved, we have nothing to trust in but the precious blood of Christ.

The price paid to offended justice, the blood of Jesus Christ, cleanseth from all sin. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." He who began the good work in us has carried it on. Our nature having undergone no change, we feel vile; yea, more vile than ever, and have often to cry, Vile and full of sin, can it be that I, poor, sinful I, can have passed from death unto life? Glory be to our God, the purpose of God will stand, and he will fulfill all his good pleasure. Not one of his purchased ones shall be lost. If I am one of the number chosen in Christ, all the powers of earth, hell and sin cannot drag me down to perdition. God the Father sees in Christ's obedient life and suffering of death, merit which is put to account of all the chosen in Christ. Why then should I allow my harp to hang upon the willows? Because I cannot help it. Satan and my nature continue to hide from my view the atoning sacrifice of my Redeemer. Everlasting honor rests on the head of the elect Redeemer. In heaven stands our Surety, who in the garden and on the cross suffered to redeem those that the Father gave him. Why, brother,

it makes me feel like leaping, when the Holy Ghost gives me a faith's view of my glorious Redeemer in heaven, presenting his obedient life and sufferings for my acceptance. I say to myself, Cast down, why should I be, when Christ's merits for my sake have been before my Father's eyes from eternity, and in his dear Son he sees all the law required or justice demanded? At such times I can say,

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,  
Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown him Lord of all."

Astonishing it is that, for all this, doubts and fears will come, and in "Doubting Castle" I am found. Then, like Bunyan's pilgrim, I am held, fearing I have deceived myself, that the root of the matter is not in me, and that in the end I shall find myself a castaway. Here I lie sometimes, beaten by "Giant Despair," until it seems there is but little life in me. But glory be to our God, Immanuel appears, God the Holy Ghost works faith in my poor soul, and again I get a sight of his bloody wounds and dying groans, and all for the sake of those chosen in him. Instantly the key of faith is taken from my bosom, which will unlock every lock and draw forth every bolt, and I am found erecting for the time a sign-post, to warn other poor pilgrims who, like me, may become the prisoners of "Giant Despair." Jesus says, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." O how I can then shout to the praise of free grace. Why, if I had at such times ten thousand tongues, I would feel that they all failed to fully set forth the riches of sovereign love. Like my poor sister to whom the Lord has made your words spiritual food, I often, very often, feel lonely. In my case it seems that I am in a worse position than she is. When her sickness does not hinder, she can go and hear you blow the free grace gospel trumpet, and find a refreshing from the Lord. But as for me, poor me, I am surrounded by Hagar's children, who are, and ever have been, in bondage, and with us there is no union. The language of my heart is to them so strange that they cannot understand me. Poor creatures, they have never been through the stripping process, nor had an experimental, feeling sense of the holiness of the law, nor of him who gave it, and so they fancy to themselves that they can accept or reject salvation by the power of free will. The law has not been their schoolmaster unto Christ. The difference between law and grace, Christ and Moses, the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, they have never been enlightened to see. This being the case, "ought to do," "must do," "it is your own fault if you do not do," is the substance of their fleshly religion. Poor me, who have been killed stone dead, by way of expecting eternal life by obeying

master Moses, gets so severely wounded that I only find relief at the foot of the cross. Sometimes I think I will not be so singular; that I will receive the good and cast away the bad; but O, my dear brother, when I converse with Moses' lovers, and find great "Mr. If" to decide the eternal destiny of God's chosen, I rebel, and cannot refrain from speaking. To see the scales of divine justice held in the hand of my covenant God, and then be told that the doings of the creature must be put in one scale, justice and mercy in the other, and to make all right, God might add the merits of Christ, away goes all my universal, fleshly charity for such unscriptural doctrine. By so doing I bring upon myself the displeasure of all Hagar's good children. My brother, let what will be the result, I cannot help it. Moses never had a more faithful follower than my poor, sinful self. From a child the religion was ringing in my ears. While many of Moses' followers fancied they were his faithful pupils, and pleased themselves, do what I would I could never get so much as a smile from him. Hundreds of times he found fault with my doings, and sent me away to do my work better. To the uttermost I tried, but never, no never, could I please him. The Holy Spirit revealed to me the holiness of his law, and that all breakers of it to the prison of hell must go. At last I despaired of keeping it, and saw plainly that if that was the way a sinner was to be saved, there was no hope for me. From my heart I cried, Lost or saved, I will work no longer. Glory be to my covenant God, now being stripped, wounded, and killed to all hope of being saved by the deeds of the law, he who did it wrought faith in my heart to look to the finished work of Christ. By faith I saw God's Son, my dear Redeemer, sweating great drops of blood in the garden, nailed to Calvary's cross, and by faith heard him say, "My chosen and redeemed child, thou hast made a mistake in thinking thou canst save thyself, either in whole or in part. It is through my obedient life and suffering of death that thou wilt be saved. I have obeyed the law. I have satisfied divine justice. Thy enormous debt I have paid. Thou art seen by thy Father clothed in my righteousness, washed in the fountain of my blood, and as pure in his sight as if thou hadst never sinned." I ran to the fields, I danced, I sang, I called my Redeemer by all the dear names I could think of. I was no longer under the law, but under grace. O how I did hate the sins for which my Savior suffered. Sin still troubled me. My brother, my whole religion is tied up in a feeling sense of the need of Christ. Free willers and legal workers do not understand, but tell us that such doctrine makes people loose in the way of living. I think I shall speak my dear sister's experience, her husband's, and yours also, when I say

that, if we could, we would be as holy as our Creator. One thing we are moved to, which is holy living; not to purchase or recommend us to love, but because of what our God has done for us. Often am I in the dark, questioning whether, after all, I may not have deceived myself; but he who has begun the good work will carry it on.

Hoping you will be kept faithful, and made a continual blessing to my afflicted sister, and to all others who are drawn to sit under your ministry, I remain, I hope, a brother in the Lord, P.

LOUVALE, Ga., Sept. 25, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—By the mercy of our God I am again able to write you, and after three weeks' absence from home in north and east Alabama, am now at home again, and find all well and doing well, and have some evidence that my visit to the churches was of the Lord. All the appointments made were filled, and others besides. The brethren seemed glad to see me, and I assure you I was glad to shake hands with and see the faces of those whom I esteem the people of God in the sections where I visited.

I wish in this to communicate only such things as will be of general interest to the brethren. I spent one week above Birmingham, the magic city. There are a few sheep of the fold scattered over the mountains and in the valleys. We had good congregations and good meetings, and I hope the believing children were confirmed and comforted in the gospel of the blessed Son of God. I visited Cluster Springs Church, also Canaan, Ebenezer and Mt. Zion, and also filled an appointment at Pratt Mines, six miles from Birmingham. I also filled one appointment in Birmingham, the night before I left there, at a Missionary house of worship. I then came down to Columbianna, from thence to Good Water, Alexander City, Dadeville and Opelika. From there, by the request of brethren, I went up to the Bulah Association, near Lafayette, Alabama, and from thence to Lively, a little town opposite Columbus, Georgia. Elders P. J. Powell and Jenkins accompanied me most of the way around Birmingham. I feel thankful to the Lord that it was my privilege to go through there. The brethren seemed to indorse the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, which we call Bible doctrine. The Lord was pleased to give me liberty. I had unusual liberty on predestination, and many illustrations occurred to me while trying to preach it. It is known to some of the readers of the SIGNS that I believe in God's predestination of all things, a doctrine taught in the Scriptures of eternal truth, and believed and dearly loved by many in the household of faith. If I have ever experienced any doctrine, I have experienced that, and it is clearly

revealed to me; and I have not been able to draw any line in the way of limiting Jehovah, and God forbid that I ever should talk deceitfully for him, as Job's pretended friends did; and if any have ever been able to draw the line, I have not been able to find it. I believe that the chain of predestination is a whole chain, made up entirely of predestinarian links; and the principle upon which I believe the doctrine does not rest upon the base of reason, but alone upon the power of our God, who does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, nor say, What doest thou? "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor?" I say he has, and does; and who can hinder him? Some have accused me of riding the predestination horse too much; but if they will tell me how long Jacob sucked oil out of the flinty rock, they can tell me when to dismount. Excuse me for referring to a circumstance in Alabama. A dearly beloved sister, a humble disciple of Jesus, and, I trust, a child of God, when I met her, said, "Well, brother Lively, I have been wanting to see you for some time." She had been reading articles in the *Pathway*, a paper published several years ago in Troy. The subject of predestination was sprung. She said she wanted to say to me that she wished the brethren would not write on it, because it was so deep the little ones could not understand it, and it would cripple them; that Paul said, if eating meat would cause his brother to offend, he would eat no more meat while the world stood; and she applied it to the meat of the world. I told her I could say the same, in the same sense; it was meat offered in an idol's temple. She added, "You know it says we must be fed on sincere milk." I told her I had not read such an expression. I told her that Paul said he had fed the Corinthians on milk, and not on meat, because they were not able to bear it; neither were they then able, because they walked as men, and were carnal. The Scripture she intended is, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." I observed that the babes desire it now. But some presumed to skim off the cream of predestination, and that leaves only the "blue John," which is not good for the children. So I do not go about skimming the children's milk, trying to apologize for our God; for he needs no apology from us; for he is God, and besides him there is none else. Those who can make such fine philosophic, hair-splitting distinctions between foreknowledge and predestination, I admit they may confuse the little ones; but as for me I cannot do that, nor do I try. I believe our God is one God, and his doctrine is one doctrine, and I do not want to see it divided. Let the

other woman have the child, but do not divide the child. I am willing to accept it as God has taught it in his word. It is plain enough for me. And if the word predestination was not in the Bible, since the principle is so clearly revealed I would be bound to accept it as the truth of God. The word God is not in the book of Esther;—but his hand is so clearly revealed that the name is left out. It is the principle we cling to, and not the mere name; so I hope that apparent objection may fall to the ground with those who love the word of our God. God claims all things under the whole heaven as his, and he says he does what he wills with his own, and that settles the question with me. The doctrine is one that underlies the christian, and affords him comfort under all circumstances; that nothing can befall us only what God sees fit. Truly does the poet say,

"In the midst of the storm,  
In the midst of the gloom,  
Fear not, trembling one,  
It is I."

"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Then if we wish to know who works all things, Paul says that God works all things after the counsel of his own will. Job's friends opposed the doctrine, but Job says, "I know thou canst do everything, and that no thought is withholden from thee." How did Job know it? By revelation; and that is the ground of defense to-day. Carnal reason has devised many witty things to set aside the glorious doctrine, but it still stands Gibraltar-like, never to be overthrown. If the foundation be destroyed, what shall the righteous do? Our hope is that this Rock can never be destroyed; hence we rejoice. This rock yields rivers of oil to the church of our God in time. I have been told to try to steer between the quicksands of Arminianism and the rock of fatality; but as I read of but one Rock, that is the true Rock, I hope I am on that Rock, called the Rock of offense, but now changed to the "rock of fatality." However hateful they may attempt to make this Rock, I say that he is our Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him, let him do what he pleases; for he does that with his own. He is above all law, and the source of all law, and therefore in no sense can he sin; for sin is the transgression of the law. He can destroy a nation at once, and it would be no sin, nor would he be the author of sin either. His eternal highness is lost to the natural mind. Hence to the spiritual man, by his Spirit, he reveals the deep and hidden things of his counsel. His hand hath formed the crooked serpent. These are parts of his ways; but the thunder of his power who can understand? He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the children of Israel. We will trust him, though he slay us. "Shall we receive good

at the hand of the Lord, and not evil? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." What God executes in time, he determined in eternity. His purposes are as extensive as his wisdom, and his power is the same. May we have grace to bow and worship him who created all things for his pleasure, and remember that he made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil; that he forms the light, and creates darkness; that he makes peace, and creates evil; that he created the waster to destroy; that he is God in the absolute sense.

Yours in hope,

W. LIVELY.

#### CHURCH UNITY.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—I received this communication from A. B. Brees, of Spencerville, Ohio, and if you think advisable, please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Very respectfully, your brother in tribulation,

GEORGE COTTRELL.

VERSAILLES, Ohio, Oct. 11, 1888.

THE first epistle of Paul to the Corinthian brethren is a very concise and comprehensive work on church identity, unity and history. I wish I could be favored with expression suitable to a subject so nearly related to my experience. When I first felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart as a pardoned sinner, as related in former numbers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I felt a great desire to find agreeable companions for my enjoyment, and always felt a great preference for aged people, rather than the gay and frivolous youths of my acquaintance. I had the privilege of Sunday School and other religious societies, and as men I equally esteemed all classes of men; and though not totally void of follies, I could not find satisfactory enjoyment in their gratification; and so dissatisfied was I with the most convenient and familiar associations of life, that I sought to find a company of God-fearing and God-honoring men. I felt that somewhere on earth there were such as "Feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Common language called them the "church." And I had attended several so-called bodies, such as New and Old School Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, Quakers, and a private circle of Spiritualists. None were more inconvenient for me to attend regularly every Sunday than the Old School Baptists. Their meetings were about seven miles away, and held but once a month; and as my father took no special interest in religion, and my mother was not the most decided in many points of their faith at that time, although a member, I seldom heard them preach, until I was of age. In the meantime, so deeply were my anxieties aroused to find

the people of my love, that I accepted each opportunity to attend, and found an answer in my heart for each point of doctrine there set forth. But knowing nothing of order, I only accepted the harmony of faith as evidence of order also. While thus emerging from my half-conscious state of spiritual existence, I had access to a Testament that I finally carried while plowing, and otherwise employed, and read while resting the team; and as I knew predestination was one vital point of difference between the Old and all New Schools, I marked whatever places seemed to bear on that subject. Finding none opposed to, but all agreeing therewith, I could not help believing what my whole experience had also led me to accept as truth. Without rehearsing further particulars, I will only repeat that I was led, contrary to all natural inclinations and surroundings of early influence, to accept of the faith and order of the Old School Baptists, as fast and as far as I became acquainted with them. My heart said, "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee. Thy God shall be my God, and thy people my people." Though I had never had access to church history, I felt and still believe, that I joined the only divinely authorized church of Jesus Christ, descended from the apostles through all the dark mazes of the past. I do not pretend that the church is clear of any corrupting influence; but I do believe that God has still led his people in a continuous line of relationship down to the present, and will lead them on up to the final close of time, and will preserve to himself a name and a tabernacle of worship. As church experience and walk necessitated me to become somewhat familiar with church business, I found my home had some evident tokens of the presence of the flesh as well as of the Spirit, so that I was enabled to realize the need of special "grace" in church life, as well as in christian walk. This also led me to search and compare Scripture records of church history with my own internal feeling; and as opportunity offered, I began to read profane history, in order to trace some of God's work through the dark ages, I heard so much about. Borrowing a "History of the Church" of a Roman Catholic priest, I was gratified to see that the Baptists were as much entitled to the claim of apostolic succession as themselves. This did not strengthen my faith in that fact, as I know of, but I felt comforted to see that my God could make even our enemies testify to the truth. Though I read all church history with caution, lest I place my hope there, yet I would rather read even Catholic history than the commentaries of any of her daughters.

I agree with you, dear brother Beebe, that no claim of apostolic succession entitles any organization to the rightful authority as the

church of God; but I am very easy to be persuaded that a church is apostolic, both in succession and order, when I can see the Spirit of Christ so directing them that peace, love and liberty rule in all their relations; for these fruits of the Spirit cannot exist under any other order than that laid down in the Scriptures, and bear testimony that they are led by the same Spirit that indited the divine record. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." This Spirit is not only local, but universal; for Paul testifies that the church of God was not only at Corinth, but "With all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." And again, Peter said at the house of Cornelius, "That in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

Without further evidence, I deem these sufficient to show that the unity of the church of God is the only safe grounds of fellowship, and as a consequence of apostolic succession in order. It would be vain for an organization in one locality to set up rules for the government of another local body; but, in order that the unity of fellowship may be enjoyed, they all must come to the standard of order that Jesus has laid down, and that was followed by the apostles. Even Peter, although an apostle, stopped to ascertain "Who shall forbid water?" Showing that he followed the rule of inviting all present, of like faith, to a "seat in counsel." Hence I assert that no church that desires the fellowship of sister churches will receive a member contrary to the counsel of those corresponding or fellowshiping churches.—Acts x. 48. Letters of recommendation were also recognized as necessary in some cases, by the apostle Paul.—2 Cor. iii. 1. Showing his zealous care for the general union and fellowship of all branches of the Zion of our God. The spirit of church independence is as prolific of evil as personal independence. Those who claim the prerogative of church independence are, as a rule, passionate, and not careful to observe the apostolic advice to Elders, "Not soon angry," and seem to have little regard for the laws of Zion as laid down by the blessed Master. The blessed laws of Jesus are not heavy to the heart that God has blessed with lovely grace. I have had the blessed company of a few faithful and loving brethren ever since I joined the church. Some are gone to their blessed reward. I recall Elders L. L. Delano, Matthew Brown, G. M. Peters and Uriah Trumbo, all of whom I always cherish in holy memory, under a sense of God's blessed uniting grace. And among the names not familiar to the readers of the SIGNS, but who love and advocate the same glorious realities, I still enjoy, as unworthy as I am, the blessed companionship of tribulation and love, are Elders

J. G. Ford, J. P. Peters and George Cottrell.

Thus, dear brethren, I have no cause to complain, nor to glory in the flesh. God's goodness has been very good to me; and yet I feel lonely, poor, weak, and dependent upon him for daily grace, the cares of life are so great in proportion to my ability to discharge them.

Dear brother Cottrell, I wrote this for the SIGNS, but send it to you. Pardon me for not writing specially to you.

A. B. BREES.

ALBION, Ind., Oct. 9, 1888.

MY DEAR KINDRED:—After a busy day in the school-room, my mind sweetly lingers on things heavenly and divine, and I long to talk to the dear saints about Jesus and his love. How vividly come back those days when I first found rest; that rest for the weary and heavy laden; the joy that filled my whole heart when Jesus appeared and whispered peace. Though but a child, as it were, I was led from all my youthful friends, to ask to journey with a few Old Baptists who held services bi-monthly at our school-house. There were only a few of them, and none of my age. But O I loved them, and felt toward them as Ruth did toward Naomi; and how I rejoiced when those dear old saints seemed to have love for me. How foolish, childish and unworthy I felt; yet I desired to go whither they went, that they might watch over me for good. Truly I felt that I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Yes, I would be less than the least of all saints, only let me journey with them. On "Easter Sunday," nearly five years ago, I was baptized, and what a happy day that was; and my joy continued for eighteen months. Then, when hearing dear saints talk of doubts and fears, I became alarmed, lest I knew not the experience of God's dear children. I even prayed for these "dark times" that I heard the brethren talk of. I thought I would know all about it, and even had the way all marked for it. But it came in a way and at a time I knew and planned not. Satan never comes telling us who he is, and what his business is. O no; he comes as an angel of light, and we lend a helping hand to increase our darkness. It was not until I had been enveloped in darkness and gloom for several days, with no light, that I was made to realize what it all meant. I was going to school at the time, and O I was so sick, so burdened, I felt like some awful catastrophe was about to come upon us. I lost my appetite, and could not sleep. I went to the doctor and got a prescription, but did not seem to be any better, until all at once this dreadful feeling was removed, and I found myself praising God for his goodness and mercy, fully realizing that

"There is but one Physician  
Can cure a sin-sick soul."

Yes, just as soon as Jesus appeared, I seemed to understand what it had all been, and could again exclaim, "My Lord and my God!" Since then it has been a mixture of joy and sorrow. For a few days I have been very happy in the assurance of faith. We have just had a refreshing season. Our pastor met with us, and cried unto us again, that our warfare was accomplished and our iniquities pardoned. There are only a few of us, but we are in peace. As I looked at the dear ones, some so feeble and tottering, I wondered who would be the first to mar the peace that has so long prevailed; and I asked the question, "Lord, is it I?" O I pray the dear Lord may ever keep me from it. May I ever be kept from the pride of human reason, and ever realize that I am poor, helpless, dependent upon his mercy. What are we any way, that he is mindful of us? Indeed it is in the Lord Jesus only that we have any righteousness or strength; and this is just such a righteousness as can answer all the demands of justice, all the requirements of the law, all the guilt of conscience, and render a person spotless in the sight of God. Bless the dear Lord, vile, unworthy and deformed as we are, in him we are fair and comely. O the wonders of divine, glorious, sovereign and distinguishing grace, that we should be so highly favored, and brought into such sweet union, and enjoy such communion with Jesus and his followers. In him how perfect and sure is our salvation; for he changeth not. Though we vary in our frames, he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. "Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." What a mercy to rest in his love! How harmonious is the chain connected with the Lord's dealings with his children, both in providence and grace; and how much the spiritual travel of poor, tempest-tossed pilgrims of this time resembles the travel of the Israelites. I have found much comfort of late in reading the book of Deuteronomy; how the children of Israel were assured again and again that they were not loved or chosen because they were more in number than any other people; for they were the fewest of all people; neither for any goodness nor righteousness of their own; for they were a stiff-necked people. But they were thus loved and chosen because the Lord would keep the oath he had made. Ah, how sure are the dear Lord's wills and shalls. In this same book do we have the blessed news of the eternal God being our refuge, and of those everlasting arms that are underneath us, and of the safety there is in dwelling alone, and not being reckoned among the nations. When we can feel in our hearts that these precious promises are to the few, the persecuted, the despised, the poor in

spirit, the hungering and thirsting ones, those who dwell alone, even that remnant according to the election of grace, how secure we feel, and how sweetly we can drink in the living waters from that boundless ocean of God's grace, which is without bottom, brim or shore. Then indeed can we sing, "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord." This is being led up on Mt. Pisgah, and looking over into the promised land. But as every hill suggests a valley, so are we again to be there; for we are journeying Zionward. And while we journey, it is a constant moving, and we can see the promises, but afar off, and mourn an absent Lord, and cannot sing the Lord's songs in a strangeland. But we can say with one of God's humble poor, that the more we feel our own misery, the more we learn to value Jesus. The more we know of him, the more we trust in him. The more we trust him, the more we love and obey him. To know Jesus was the top of Paul's ambition, and is the joy and crown of each believer. It is the pinnacle of glory, and, according to the Lord's own account, is "eternal life."

How much we were comforted by Elder Chicks's article on "My times are in his hands." How blessed to thus feel that the bounds of our habitation are set, the period of our time on earth, and the calling in which we are to abide, are all appointed by the unerring wisdom of the Most High, whose superintending care and unerring wisdom runs through the circumstances that attend us through this life. "My times," saith the sweet singer of Israel, "are in thy hands."

We have so much enjoyed the last number of the SIGNS. With what joy did we read the experience of our sister, Mattie S. Derr, whom we had the pleasure of meeting last June, and sister Dulin, who seems so spiritually-minded, and our poetical sister of Canada, as well as all the rest of the contributors to the SIGNS. Although I cannot understand some of the deep doctrine that the SIGNS contains, yet what I can understand I love, and I sometimes hope I do understand the christian experience, and the blessedness of grace.

With much love to all the dear saints, I am yours in much weakness,

EMMA SMITH.

P. S.—I recently heard from Mary Parker. The dear sufferer still lives, and trusts in the Lord.

E. S.

CHURCH HISTORY DEBT.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—For the information of your subscribers, please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the following account of the cause, the present condition, and the prospects of the payment of the Church History Debt.

The principal of the debt, \$2,000, is the excess of my unavoidable ex-

penses above my income during the six years when I was at work on the Church History. While I was engaged in preparing the book, I and my family had to live. I labored hard day and night, depriving myself for several years not only of the time needed for the support of my family, but of numerous midnight hours greatly needed for rest and sleep; and I accomplished the task imposed upon me by my brethren as faithfully as I could. It was a labor of love, both on the part of my father (who worked about four years on the History) and on the part of myself; we made no charge for our services. I sacrificed my school at Wilson, N. C., to the History, and sold myself and family out of house and home, and have mortgaged nearly all my property, except my books and school apparatus, which have very small pecuniary value, though valuable to me as a teacher, in order to secure the payment of the debt of \$2,000. I never expected to ask my brethren to help me pay any of this debt, but thought that there would be income enough from the sale of the book to pay it; and this would have been the case, and the debt would have been about cancelled by this time, if the book had contained no more matter than I ever promised it should contain. But it contains three times as much matter (and even this seems but small for the history of the church for about six thousand years); so that, as the publishers and binders had of course to be paid first, I have not realized a cent from the sale of the books, and I still owe the publishers two hundred dollars for printing and binding four thousand copies. They have about six hundred dollars' worth of books and agents' accounts on hand; and, if these books should ever be sold, and the accounts collected, there will be a credit to me of about four hundred dollars to go toward paying the debt. On each copy of the book hereafter printed and sold I am to have seventy-five cents (or only fifty cents if sold by paid agents), if any more copies should ever be sold; but the sale is very small now, while I have already paid seven hundred dollars interest on the debt, and the interest (eight per cent.) is constantly accumulating. There is but little probability, I think, of my ever receiving enough from the sale of the book to pay even the interest on the borrowed money.

Because of the great increase of matter, it was impossible to furnish the book in leather binding for two dollars; but it was furnished in good cloth binding for that price, and the binders charged half a dollar extra for the leather binding. I do not know of any other book, so large and so well printed and bound as the Church History, that is sold at so small a price. As books usually sell, the History in cloth binding would bring about three dollars. Schaff's History of the Apostolic Church, in cloth binding, though it gives the history of only a hundred years, and

contains only about half as much matter as the Church History, sells for four dollars. The postage on each copy of the Church History is nearly a quarter of a dollar; and another quarter of a dollar is allowed on each book to any one who buys as many as six copies at a time; so that only about a dollar and a half may be received for the book itself.

It is all I can possibly do to support, in a very economical manner, my family of six by the income from my present school and the donations received by me in my ministry; so that the prospect certainly is that all my property will be sacrificed for this debt, unless my brethren and sisters and friends help me. They have already kindly contributed about five hundred dollars for this purpose, so that the present amount of the debt is about sixteen hundred dollars. If the books now in the hands of the publishers and agents should be sold (which may possibly be the case in a year or two), the amount would be reduced to about twelve hundred dollars and interest for a year or two.

The debt was contracted solely by my long-continued and earnest endeavor to serve the interests of religious and eternal truth and the cause of the Primitive Baptists. I gave my time and services to my brethren freely and in love; and if they with equal freeness will give me money to pay this debt, or will help to sell copies of the History so that I can be relieved of the debt, I hope that I shall feel humbly thankful to them and to the Lord for putting such love in their hearts. The inspired apostle Paul affectionately exhorts us to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Gal. vi. 2.

Yours in love,

SYLVESTER HASSELL.

WILLIAMSTON, N. C., Oct. 16, 1888.

GLENWOOD, Tex., Oct. 3, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I am writing on business, I will once more endeavor to write a few lines for our beloved paper, the SIGNS, which comes to us regularly laden with good things, so calculated to promote a healthy growth among the little ones. I have just returned from the Sulphur Fork Association, which met with the church at Providence, near Mt. Vernon, Franklin Co., Texas, and I do not think I ever visited a more enjoyable meeting. Indeed it seemed that there was nothing lacking to make it a feast of good things to every child of grace. There were some twelve or fourteen preachers present, all coming from different parts of the country, all bringing the same glorious tidings, salvation by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, but the gift of God. The meeting of the messengers and visitors was a pleasant sight, and in their parting a feeling prevailed that manifested the great love they had for one another. This association seems wide awake to the fact

that their body is only a creature of the churches, and have no right to "lord it over God's heritage."

The Moderator, Elder R. T. Webb, is a good disciplinarian, as well as an able defender of the truth, and does not fail to "put the brethren in remembrance" that the association has no right to sit as a court of appeals, to hear and decide difficulties for the churches, &c., but merely meets as a body of worshipers, and by mutual agreement to hear messages of love from the different churches, representing their condition, number, number received, died, excluded, &c., since their last session, note the same, and make arrangements for publishing Minutes as desired, and appoint the next time and place of meeting. They do not believe that the law given in the Scriptures for the government of the churches, either in public or private offenses, is applicable to an association of churches; but all manner of difficulties must be settled in the churches where they exist. That the church, based upon the apostolic platform, being governed by the divine law of her Master, is the highest ecclesiastic authority on earth; and her members are amenable to her, and from her decision there is no appeal. They seem to fully recognize the right of a church to dissolve her connection with an association at any time without that act in any degree affecting her order. If I am not mistaken (and if I am I hope some of the brethren before whose eyes this will come will correct me), these are about the views in general of the brethren, of the powers of an association. I will add, however, that the tenth Article of their Constitution says, "This Association shall have the power to give the churches advice in all matters of difficulties;" and, "This Association shall drop from her fellowship any church which may be unsound in faith or disorderly in practice." In all the business of this association I do not think that the time consumed exceeded three hours. The peace, harmony and brotherly love, together with the able, instructive and edifying preaching, were indeed a feast to me, and I felt constrained to pen these few lines with reference to it. While listening to the old soldiers of the cross so ably present the gospel truth, and set up such defenses, there is a feeling of sadness mingled with our joy, when we remember that they cannot be with us long. But at the same time we feel to thank the Lord for them, and thank and praise his holy name that he has manifested the same gift in younger brethren, who are coming on.

The next session of this body will be held with Prospect Church, Bowie Co., Texas, near Bassett, on the Texas & St. Louis R. R., commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in October. If the Lord will, I expect to be there, and would be glad to meet some of the brethren from the older states. Elder Beebe, a visit from

you to our state would be highly appreciated by many of the brethren, sisters and friends. Can you visit us next fall and be at some of our associations?

With love to all the household of faith, I remain yours in a humble hope,  
H. B. JONES.

HOPEWELL CAPE, N. B., August, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It becomes my duty for the first time to drop you a few lines in reference to our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Brother Gilbert Dixon, who departed this life on May 2d, 1888, requested me, as a joint subscriber, to continue the SIGNS; and as the time to remit is close at hand, I will endeavor to do so; for I dearly love the truth it contains. I believe, from what I have read in the paper, that you by the grace of God endeavor only to write and allow to be published that truth which is as old as God, and as lasting as God himself. It has stood in the past, and will continue to stand when everything else has passed away. O, dear brethren, how often I ask myself the question, Do I love the truth, or do I not? But, dear brethren, Christ, and him alone, will satisfy my poor, hungry, thirsty soul. When I see the crown placed upon the head of the dear Redeemer, and him crowned Lord of all, it rejoices my soul. Now, dear brethren, I will not attempt to write my mind, for I am a weak worm of the dust, and God has not been pleased to give me the gift of making known my mind, except in a broken, stammering way. But I want to say that I love him as the God that doeth all his will and pleasure. If I did not believe him to be an absolute Sovereign, where would be the ground of my hope?

About all the preaching I hear is what I get in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. O how I would like to hear some of those dear, old servants of God tell of the things of Jesus. When reading their communications, how my soul goes out to them, and to all the dear brethren and sisters, born in the one city, taught in the one school, and walking in the same path, the path of the redeemed. Remember me at the throne of grace, that I may be kept humble, and put my trust in God alone. May I have grace to keep me from the errors of this day, which have enough truth in them to lead away some of the children of God, who do not carefully watch and search the Scriptures to see whether such things are true or not. I give the SIGNS to those around me. Some say they like what it advocates; but when I ask them to subscribe for it, they say they are too poor, and I come to the conclusion that they do not mean what they say. If I love the truth, and can get it for a dollar a year, I will make some sacrifice to obtain it.

I met with a great loss when brother Dixon died. He stood firm, and lived what he preached, and was well versed in the truth. We never

met at his house but what the subject of religion was mentioned. He was very unpopular with the religious people of this day, for he met them on every hand. He died as he had lived, strong in the faith. He suffered little pain, being sick only one month with quick consumption. He was about the house until the day he died.

May God give you, and all his dear children, that grace which will enable them to live near the cross, and trust him in all things, is the prayer of this poor child of God, if one at all.  
FREEMAN CROCKER.

ATTICA, Iowa, Jan. 2, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—I may claim that relationship, unworthy as I know myself to be; but it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. I read the many able communications from watchmen upon the walls of Zion, proclaiming the great and fundamental principles of our salvation by grace. The eternal purpose of God before man was formed is not popular with the world, nor has it ever been, from the days of Cain to the present time. The same spirit of persecution is increasing. I am sorry to find some precious ones who cannot see any beauty in God's foreknowledge, but so it must be. It reminds us that it is time for the shepherds to watch over the little flocks that God has given them the oversight of. Cry aloud, and spare not. There is nothing that can strengthen and build up the hope of a poor, weak and helpless child of God like the firm belief that God did foreknow the purpose for which he created the heavens and the earth and all things therein. All time and things past and to come are spoken of in his word. All the great calamities in the world John saw, and said, Here is wisdom. Who gave him this knowledge? We must admit that it was from God, or say that it is all false. Let me say for one poor, wayfaring traveler, who has been stumbling along this rugged road for forty-nine years, that I in myself am wrong, but God is all wisdom, honor and glory. This is what I have been contending for, and have been called many hard names for pretending to know anything about so great a matter. But I read, "The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Now, dear brethren, one and all, fear not to preach the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and predestination in the strongest language you can command, and then you will fail to portray it in all its force and bearing to poor, fallen man.

CHARLOTTE KERRICK.

#### THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

WE have received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

#### CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Providence Church, Trimble Co., Ky., on Friday before the first Saturday and two succeeding days in September, 1888, to the several churches composing her body, sendeth greeting, love and christian salutation.*

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD:—Another year of many cares, joys, sorrows, hopes, trials and tribulations has rolled its rounds and is numbered with the things of the past since we last assembled together; and we hail with delight the privilege of once more addressing you our Circular Letter. Jesus has promised to be our help in every time of trouble, and he will certainly fulfill his promise. Whatever we may be called to pass through in this life, let it be joys, sorrows, hopes, fears, trials or deliverances, Jesus has promised to be our friend; for he knows better what is for our good than we do. The Lord said, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord."—Zeph. iii. 12.

Then, dear brethren, how many of us are trusting alone in the name of the Lord for life and salvation? Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; and "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12. Again, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works," &c.—2 Tim. i. 9. And again, "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus ii. 14. Are these not comforting to the children of God, we who are sinners by nature and practice, dead in trespasses and sins? They were the objects of his love and mercy before time began; for he hath declared, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Thus it is by the power of the God of heaven we are drawn, and are bought with a price, and belong alone to Jesus. Ought we not to be glad that Jesus paid the debt, all the debt we owe? We were ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Jesus met the law's demands, and bade the captive go free. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Dear brethren, is this not a wonderful love of the Father, before time was to ordain the way of life and salvation for us, poor sinners; to send into the world at the appointed time his only begotten Son, to die the ignominious death of the cross? "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Then, dear brethren, let your light so shine before men that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven. Not glory to us for anything we can do, but to God alone be all the glory.

We pray that you may walk as obedient children, striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Finally, farewell. May the glorious Redeemer welcome you to your eternal home with, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace be with you.

N. A. HUMSTON, Mod.  
E. F. RANSELL, Clerk.

*The Juniata Association of Primitive Baptists, in session with the Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Oct. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1888, to the churches of which she is composed, sendeth greeting.*

DEAR BRETHREN:—In sending you our annual letter, we deem it our duty to exhort you to continued steadfastness in the faith of our God, and the order of his word. Much might be said upon this important subject. Jude says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude writes to the beloved ones, and speaks of that salvation common to all the dear saints of God, whether Jew or Gentile, young or aged, rich or poor. Not "common" in an earthly sense, but rich as pearls of India, valuable as the gold of Ophir, a precious, heavenly treasure, revealed in the salvation of lost and helpless sinners; the same salvation experienced by Jew or Gentile, young or aged, "common" to all the dear saints of God. Jude says he gave all diligence to write of this, and of nothing different, and exhort them with all godly zeal to continue to contend earnestly. Of course, not angrily, but with an earnest zeal born of God. The object to be contended for is the "faith once delivered unto the saints." There have been no changes in any sense from that faith once delivered. The fullness of that glorious faith revealed in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ continues through all ages, a light of glorious immortality. This faith was delivered to the saints, not to a gainsaying world; and comes to them a word of comfort and instruction, revealing their daily emotions, their conflicts and joys, giving assurance of heavenly encouragement, and final deliverance from mortal bondage into the glorious liberty of the children of God. We close with the closing expression in the epistle of Jude, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

E. V. WHITE, Mod.  
J. M. CUTSHALL, Clerk.

CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Mount Pleasant Association of Regular Baptists, now in session with the Providence Church, in Trimble Co., Ky., August 31st, Sept. 1st and 2d, 1888, to the Baltimore, Delaware, Delaware River, Warwick and Chemung Associations of Old School Baptists, sendeth christian love and salutation.*

VERY DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—It is written, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name." Without associations and communing one with another the dear saints are deprived of the sweet privilege of talking to each other upon the superlative glories of his wondrous name, and thus having their meditations lifted from the vain and transitory things of time; to things holy, heavenly and divine. This leads us, a feeble few who trust in the Lord and look alone to him as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, to ask that a correspondence may be opened between each of your associations and us. We hope that the great Head of the church may sanctify that correspondence, if entered into, to the spiritual good of us all, and to the declarative glory of his reverend name.

N. A. HUMSTON, Mod.  
E. F. RANSELL, Clerk.

*The Juniata Old School Baptist Association, convened with Fairview Church, Fulton Co., Pa., Oct. 5th, 6th and 7th, 1888, to the associations with whom she corresponds, sends greeting.*

IN the providence of our God we have been permitted to meet again in an associational capacity, and have heard from distant parts of Zion through your messengers, who have come to us in the fullness of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our session has been one of peculiar interest to your messengers and to us, and we hope profitable and long to be remembered in the history of our association. The preaching of the cross has been attended with the power of the Spirit of our God, so that the saints have been fed with heavenly food from the bountiful hands of our God, making us to rejoice in the inner man, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. We sincerely desire the continuance of your brotherly correspondence, inasmuch as we have not an ordained minister in the bounds of our association.

Our next session will be held with the Providence Church, Bedford Co., Pa., on Friday before the first Sunday in October, 1889, at 11 o'clock a. m., when we hope to meet you again. May the blessing of God be with us all. Amen.

E. V. WHITE, Mod.  
J. M. CUTSHALL, Clerk.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF  
G. BEEBE'S SONS.

CORRESPONDENCE AND FELLOWSHIP.

IN reply to many inquiries on the subject of the effect of the suspension or dropping of correspondence between associations or churches, we submit a general statement of our understanding of the teaching of the inspired rule. As professed followers of the Lord Jesus the saints cannot consistently recognize as authoritative any rule which has not the sanction of his inspired judges, which can be found only in the record of their decisions as given in the New Testament. Without direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost there can never be anything added to that record; and as all christians must hold that record to be perfect, it is not consistent to suppose it can ever require either additions or revision. It necessarily follows, therefore, that when we are at a loss to decide what course is right for us to follow, the defect is in our understanding of the law of Christ, and not in that law itself.

It should be observed that the fellowship of the saints is not under the control of their own natural will. Where it exists it is inseparably identified with that love which flows from the internal power of the Spirit of Christ; and this living principle can neither be forced nor restrained by the will of the saint in whom it is found. Not only is it entirely separate from natural affection and aversion, but it has its origin in another and separate fountain. Natural feelings arise from the corrupt and sinful natural mind; however highly esteemed among men some of these natural emotions may be, they are still of the earth, and therefore corrupted by the contamination of sin, and under the curse which passed upon the ground in consequence of the first transgression of the commandment of the Creator in the garden, which was committed by all men in their natural father, the earthy Adam. Nothing so polluted can enter the sacred dwelling place of the saints in the presence of their holy Redeemer. The fellowship of the saints in Christ Jesus is the manifestation of that divine love which is the fruit of the Spirit of Christ in them, and it is by this abiding principle that they are sealed as the chosen heirs of God and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Whatever professions of union may be adopted, there can be no true fellowship where this love is not abiding in the

heart of those who claim to be united. Without fellowship, correspondence must be an empty formality; on the other hand, fellowship may be full and free even though there be no correspondence. In fellowship of the Spirit the saints to-day sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus with the prophets and apostles, although intervening centuries forbid that they should correspond with them in manifestation of that fellowship by mutual interchange of verbal expressions of fraternal love.

Certainly no correspondence can be profitable to the saints unless they have fellowship with those with whom they correspond. Surrounding circumstances may interrupt their communication without affecting the unity of the Spirit in which their fellowship is grounded. Examples of this are numerous in the Scriptures. There was no breach of fellowship when the saints were scattered from Jerusalem by persecution, although necessarily correspondence was for a season interrupted. Paul and Barnabas were with sharp contention separated, yet there is no account that their fellowship was broken.—Acts viii. 1; xi. 19; xv. 36-41. Thus, it is evident that correspondence may be broken without affecting fellowship. But where the fellowship is absent, correspondence must be destitute of that love in which is found not only all real enjoyment, but everything which makes correspondence profitable to the saints.

Under the guidance of the Spirit of Christ which dwells in his people, the church must ever determine whether fellowship is broken by the suspension of correspondence with an individual member, as commanded by Paul (2 Thess. iii. 12, 13), or with one or more churches, from whom correspondence is withdrawn. The judgment of no uninspired man can be admitted as conclusive and of universal application in all cases which may arise. As no form of expression can be prescribed as a test by which to determine the acceptance or rejection of applicants for membership in the church, so no case of discipline can be safely decided upon the mere statement of attending circumstances. Reason would have rejected the persecuting Saul of Tarsus, as did Ananias; but the Spirit overruled the decision of reason, and changed the injurious and blaspheming Saul into the obedient apostle Paul.—See 1 Tim. i. 12, 13; Acts ix. 10-20.

There can be no acceptable obedience to the commandments of our Lord without the direction of his Spirit; and that Spirit never makes any mistake. Since no finite intelligence can comprehend the mind of the Spirit, there can be no one qualified to say beforehand how any case should be decided by the church. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things

of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God."—1 Cor. iv. 5. The Lord will never fail by his Spirit to come to guide his saints in the right way and at the right time; but they are not enabled to command that manifestation of the Spirit when it suits their finite and selfish will. In their impatience even the saints may err from the truth in following their own carnal judgment when they are not led by the Spirit of truth. The result of such error will ever be manifest in wars and fightings amongst those who have walked together in the love and fellowship of the gospel. Such results were found among the churches even before the apostles fell asleep. Such errors in doctrine as were held among the churches of Galatia would hardly be tolerated by the saints of the present day; while such immorality as Paul condemned in the Corinthian church would be conclusive in condemnation of their claim to the name of a church in our judgment. Yet the Spirit of Christ reclaimed them, and they stand as a perpetual testimony of the power of divine grace in redeeming the wandering saints from the error of their ways. It is not to be understood from these recorded cases that the saints are authorized to follow the errors of those churches; on the contrary, they are left as a warning to all ages, that they who love the Lord may be careful to avoid those errors. But the goodness and long-suffering of God appear so abundantly in those cases which are written in the Scriptures, that we should be careful how we assume to limit the boundary beyond which that infinite grace may not be displayed. We are certainly safe in withdrawing from all who walk disorderly, either in doctrine or practice; but they are not committed to our keeping; therefore the church of Christ can never persecute even such as are avowed enemies of the truth. If they are subjects of divine grace the love of Christ will lead them to repentance; if they are without the sacred fold of redeeming grace, God will manifest their condemnation in his own appointed time. It is not enjoined upon the saints to examine any but themselves. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"—2 Cor. xii. 5. After obeying this commandment in the spirit of truth, the saints will hardly find themselves prepared to extend their investigations over their brethren. That sweet fellowship which results from love, will ever be manifest in each esteeming others better than self; and the greatest miracle of grace which appears to each one who truly thus examines himself, will be that there is hope in the grace of God for such a sinner as he finds himself to be. This examination of self is the

life work of those who are led by the Spirit of Christ, and it leaves them neither time nor ability to watch over their brethren either for good or for evil. They are exhorted to "Consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."—Heb. x. 24, 25.

In a scriptural sense, correspondence includes all communication between those who have received this like precious faith which works by love.—Gal. v. 6. The walk which is in obedience to the truth is the clearest expression of this correspondence. But the commonly received idea as expressed by the correspondence of the saints is that formal recognition of each other as of the same faith and order which is manifested by organizations in churches, and these associated for the purpose of communicating with each other in matters pertaining to their common faith in the gospel of Christ. It is evident that without fellowship all such correspondence must be a mockery of that sweet union which exists in the one heart of the followers of our Lord. Hence, while it is clear that fellowship is indispensable to the maintenance of a consistent correspondence, that fellowship may remain unbroken in some cases where openly expressed correspondence has been cut off. Every case must necessarily be determined upon its own merits, and the church must in all cases determine by the direction of the Spirit and according to the Scriptures the consistent limit of their own correspondence. It seems rather to savor of presumption for those who know nothing of the surrounding circumstances, to assume to dictate to a recognized church of Christ in regard to the limits of her correspondence and as to the individuals whom she shall hold in her fellowship. It is needful that the same doctrine and order of the gospel of Christ should be recognized in all who are identified in the fellowship of the saints; but the law of Christ does not authorize the assumption by any man, or company of men, of powers to dictate to a gospel church in regard to the limitation of her correspondence and fellowship.

#### "A JUST GOD AND A SAVIOR."

In all the revelation given in the providence and grace of God there is nothing so far beyond the comprehension of finite intelligence as the mystery of that grace by which God is just in the salvation of his people from their sins. From the days of Abel to the present time all the powers of the natural mind have been arrayed in opposition to the doctrine of God our Savior, in which this great mystery is revealed. Yet the truth remains unshaken by all the assaults of carnal reason and the efforts of natural pride to sub-

vert it. Since that early day the enemy of divine truth has sought to devise some other ground on which to present the hope of salvation from the curse of the holy law, which has consigned all men to death, for that all have sinned. In this common fountain is the origin of all false systems of religion, whether they claim to be deduced from the Scriptures, or boldly deny the doctrine of that grace which is revealed in Christ Jesus. All opposers of the truth agree in denying the sovereignty of God in the manifestation of his salvation to the sinful children of men. Those in our country who contend against the doctrine of grace, commonly profess to revere the authority of the inspired Scriptures, while they wrest them from their legitimate meaning, thus turning the truth of God into a lie. Others boldly dispute the authority of that record in which their systems are clearly condemned. But all unite in rejecting the only way which God has revealed whereby sinners are saved from their sins and made holy in the sight of infinite justice. Not only is this true of all orders and professions of false worshipers, but the greatest trouble suggested to the saints by their own unbelief arises from the same denial of this essential principle. Without infinite sovereignty there can be no such thing as salvation by grace for justly condemned sinners. It is therefore of vital importance to every conscious sinner that he should be assured that the God in whose grace he trusts for justification, is not limited in power to do his own will. Every revealed attribute of God is essentially necessary to the accomplishment of the great mystery of saving the chief of sinners. He must be infinite in holiness as well as immutable in his purpose of love; and his power must be equal to the task of making the subjects of his grace free from their sins, or his electing love could never benefit them. Finite minds cannot comprehend the fathomless depth of that wisdom and knowledge of God which is manifested in the fulfillment of his eternal purpose of love; yet this incomprehensible truth is clearly shown unto every babe who is born of the Spirit. With men it is indeed impossible that the guilty sinners should be made holy and blameless before God in love; but in the experience of every one who is taught of God this glorious mystery is revealed. This is the only hope of salvation to those who know the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Hence, while others may be satisfied by the delusive imagination that they may escape the just punishment due to their sins by some fancied merit in themselves, those who are taught of God know that they can never see the Lord without that holiness which exceeds all the righteousness which can be attained by works of their own. In this is manifested the clear distinction between the teach-

ing of the Spirit and the delusions of human devices. None can ever love righteousness except they be led by the Spirit of God; and all such are the sons of God. All others are satisfied with the prayer of Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." They have no desire to live the life of the righteous, nor to suffer affliction with the people of God. The peculiar mark which identifies those who are sealed by the Spirit of truth is their love to the saints, which produces the desire to be partaker of their sufferings as well as to know the fellowship of their infinite joy in the presence of their Lord. This mark of the unity of the Spirit can never be counterfeited by any device of the adversary. The love of holiness is not satisfied with anything less than the perfection of divine righteousness as revealed in Jesus Christ. Every one who hungers and thirsts after that righteousness is already blessed with the assurance that he shall be filled with all the fullness of that righteousness of God which is revealed in Jesus. All such blessed ones bear the peculiar seal of the love of divine justice. They have this witness in themselves individually, and it abides with them through all their sojourn on earth. They can only hope in that salvation which magnifies the justice as well as the love and mercy of God. This is the gospel of God, as it was preached by inspired apostles, to declare his righteousness; "that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."—Rom. iii. 26.

There is no comfort for the afflicted and poor people of God in any departure from the doctrine of eternal truth; and that doctrine is revealed in their own experience just as it is written in the Scriptures. When Christ is manifested in the sinner as the hope of glory, divine justice is not less glorious in the revelation given than is the infinite mercy in which he is made to rejoice. No natural man can rejoice in the perfect and inflexible justice of God; therefore the Spirit of truth must lead every one who trusts in that grace which presents salvation exclusively in the Lord Jesus as a just God and a Savior. In this confidence of faith there is strength to endure all the trials and conflicts of their weary warfare here in time; and the same truth is their victory when they shall be delivered from the body of this death, and rejoice in the unclouded light of the eternal glory of their triumphant Redeemer. Then shall they fully realize the truth that "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne; mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Well may the inspired psalmist sing, in consideration of this gracious assurance, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance; in thy

name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted; for thou art the glory of their strength; and in thy favor our horn shall be exalted."—Psa. lxxxix. 14-17.

THE WEEKLY "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

IN our last issue we inclosed a supplement announcing our intention of publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES an eight-page weekly during the year 1889. To do this will greatly increase our expenses, and with our present circulation we cannot afford to do it; but if our brethren and friends will assist us by procuring a sufficient number of new subscribers, we shall be able to continue it weekly in subsequent years. To assist them in doing this, we make the following extraordinary offer:

From now until the first of next January, any one who is a paid-up subscriber may forward us new subscribers at the rate of one dollar a year. Any one who is not now a subscriber can have the advantages of these terms by sending us two dollars for their own subscription, and one dollar each for all subsequent new names.

These terms will not be continued after the first of January, 1889. All new names will be entered on our list as soon as received, and credited to the end of 1889, the balance of this year being sent them free. The cash must invariably accompany orders under these terms.

We have been sending the paper to a good many at half-price, who have been represented as not able to pay the full amount. All such have been supplied at an actual loss to us, even while publishing semi-monthly, and as a weekly the burden would be greater than we feel able to stand; therefore we cannot renew them for less than the regular rates.

We shall lose on every new subscriber taken at one dollar a year, but we hope to retain a sufficient number of them on our list in after years at regular rates to make us whole on what we lose the first year. Still another and principal reason for receiving new subscribers at one dollar a year is the hope that our subscribers may by this means be able to increase the circulation of the paper to twice what it was at the commencement of this volume. They have already increased it about one-third, or we should not dare undertake publishing it weekly without an increase of subscription price; and as soon as they have doubled it we will lower the price to one dollar and fifty cents a year, although weekly at two dollars is cheaper than the paper has ever before been published.

"THE EDITORIALS."

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

MARRIAGES.

By Elder J. D. Hubbell, at his residence, Kelly's Corners, Delaware Co., N. Y., Sept. 19th, 1888, Mr. Fred Ayres, of Middletown, N. Y., and Miss Nora Sanford, of Kelly's Corners, N. Y.

By the same, Sept. 26th, 1888, at the residence of the bride's parents, Margaretville, Delaware Co., N. Y., his son, Will Hubbell, and Miss Eva Taylor.

By the same, October 10th, 1888, at the home of the bride, Roxbury Village, N. Y., Mr. Edward M. Faulkner, of Middletown, N. Y., and Mrs. Elsie Carroll.

By the same, October 24th, 1888, at his residence, Mr. Wm. B. Shafer, of Shaferstown, and Miss Allie Davis, of Dingle Hill, N. Y.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

It is with feelings of sadness that I now forward for publication in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the death of our dear mother, Mrs. Charlotte Robinson, of Hector, Schuylers Co., N. Y., in the eightieth year of her age.

She experienced a hope in Christ in early life, and was baptized by Elder Mead, of Putnam Co., N. Y., nearly sixty years ago, before the division of the Baptists, and was still a member of the Primitive Baptist Church at the time of her death. Our dear mother has been afflicted for more than thirty years with a complication of diseases, and consequently was not able to meet with the church; and on account of nervous prostration she was often unable to converse with her brethren and sisters with any satisfaction when visiting her. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of election, being experimentally a predestinarian. Since our dear father's death, three years ago last April, she has been very lonely, and was often made to say, with the apostle, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." But she felt, if it was needful for her to be spared awhile longer to her children, to bow in humble submission to the divine will. For two months previous to her death she was a great sufferer from dropsy of the heart, and at times became weary of life, and said she felt the grave would be a place of rest. A short time before she died she said she felt that she was nearing her long home. I said, "Yes, I think your course is about finished, and that you can say you have kept the faith." She said, "Yes; I never have turned this way nor that, but have had to mourn and grieve so much on account of my sins." She said she was waiting and longing for the Lord to call her home. Two days before her last she became insensible, and on the 19th of September passed away, bidding adieu to all terrestrial things, and is now, as we confidently believe, enjoying that rest that remains to the people of God. We can no more go to her for counsel and advice, but may we look to him who giveth wisdom to all, and upbraideth not.

Her funeral services were held at her late residence, Elder Charles Bogardus preaching a comforting discourse from the following Scripture, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Her remains were then taken to their last resting place, to await the dawn of a glorious resurrection.

"She sleeps in Jesus, soon to rise,  
When the last trump shall rend the skies;  
Then burst the fetters of the tomb,  
To reign in full immortal bloom."

LOVINA S. ROBINSON.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the death of my beloved sister, Jennie Naylor.

The dear Lord took her to himself on the 22d of August, 1888. Her disease was consumption, and her sufferings were very great the last few weeks of her stay on earth; but she bore it all without a murmur, and with a longing desire to go to her heavenly home, yet she waited patiently for her release. She never made a public profession of religion, but we have evidence that she had a hope beyond the grave. It pleased the dear Lord to reveal himself to her as her Savior in the forgiveness of her sins while on her bed of sickness, and she expressed a desire to be baptized, but was too weak in body. One day, while conversing with her, she said, "O Rachel, what a precious thought, to know by experience that we have a precious Savior, in whom we believe and rejoice with much confidence and a hope beyond the grave." She said she had no desire to get well, and would not give her situation for all this world. She said she had no fear of death, but was only waiting God's appointed time. A few hours before her death a loving sister, who had cared for her all through her sickness, bid her good-night, and asked her if there was anything she wanted. She replied, "No, only to go to heaven." In three short hours she had a gentle dismissal from this world of sickness and pain to her heavenly home. No more will we hear her sweet voice nor see her bright, smiling face. May God bless her lonely husband and child, and also her aged parents, and all that mourn their loss. O how we miss her! but our loss is her gain. At her request our dear pastor, Elder S. H. Durand, spoke to the comfort of the mourning friends from the fourteenth chapter of John: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

"A precious one from us has gone,  
A voice we loved is stilled,  
A place is vacant in our home  
Which never can be fill'd.

"God in his wisdom has recalled  
The boon his love had given;  
And though the body molders here,  
The soul is safe in heaven."

In loving remembrance, I remain her sister,

RACHEL M. OPDYKE.

BYBERRY, PHILADELPHIA, Pa.

Peter Mikesell, eldest of thirteen children born to George and Catharine Mikesell, was born January 12th, 1807, and died September 11th, 1888, aged eighty-one years, seven months and twenty-nine days.

He was united in marriage to Amanda Wiggins, December 4th, 1828, and was permitted her companionship until March 14th, 1854, at which time she passed from earthly life to her reward, leaving her husband and seven children to mourn her absence, with the hope and sweet anticipation of a happy reunion on brighter shores.

"Uncle Peter," as he was familiarly known, in early life realized his obligations and dependence upon his Creator, and true to his convictions, joined the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church at Winchester, his native town, and was received into membership and baptized by Elder Thomas Childers, about the year 1838; and from that time to the day of his death he made earnest endeavor to live the life of a christian, and full of years, he calmly awaited his appointed time, realizing that for him to die was gain. To-day we lay the tribute of love upon the tomb of Uncle Peter. But yesterday it seems that he was with us; to-day he is gone. God lays his loving hand upon him, and he sleeps the calm sleep of death.

"Life's labor done, as sinks the clay,  
Light from its load the spirit flies;

While heaven and earth combine to say,  
How blest the righteous when he dies."

Uncle Peter was a man of sterling integrity and strong character, warmly devoted to his family and friends. He will be missed by all. From his youth his interests were identical with the interests of this community, in which he has always lived, and he did much for the advancement of the public good. His work is done, and well done. He has crossed to the brighter shore, to join mother and those whom he loved. Our hearth-stone is desolate, but not without hope. He is at rest. We bow in humble submission to the divine decree.

G. W. M. BOOKWALTER.

WINCHESTER, Ohio.

Mrs. Keziah B. Stubbs, wife of Sanford H. Stubbs, of Howell's Depot, N. Y., died September, 1888, of cholera morbus, from which she had suffered for five days.

Five years ago Mrs. Stubbs suffered from two strokes of paralysis, and from that time on she was in feeble health, being confined to the house most of the time, and therefore when cholera morbus attacked her she had not strength enough to resist its weakening effects, and died from the disease as above stated. She was a daughter of the late Mr. Solomon Wheat and Hannah Mapes, his wife, and was born Feb. 18th, 1810, in the old Wheat homestead, now the residence of Galen Otis, near Howell's Depot, where she was married to Mr. Stubbs, Nov. 8th, 1828. She is survived by her husband and three children. Mrs. Stubbs was the last survivor of a family of ten children.

Mrs. Stubbs was a devout believer in the doctrine of the Old School Baptist Church, and was very earnest in her interest in its welfare. At her request Elder Benton Jenkins conducted the funeral services. Mrs. Stubbs was a faithful and loving wife and a fond and devoted mother, whose chief concern was to order her husband's house aright, and yet she found time to go about among her friends and neighbors to assist them in sickness and trouble, and was at such times a veritable ministering angel. She always had an ear for the appeals of the needy, and no applicant for help ever went empty-handed from her door.

DIED—On Sunday, July 29th, 1888, at his home near Purdy's Station, Orange County, N. Y., Mr. Nelson Horton, in the eighty-second year of his age.

For several years he suffered from the debility that is common to old age; yet he was able to be about the house and yard until just before his departure. His mental faculties were quite well preserved, and he spent much of his time in reading the Scriptures and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; for he was a lover of the truth, having an experimental knowledge of it, although he never made a public profession of his faith and hope.

Mr. Horton was married to Miss Sarah Shons, in 1836, who died May 27th, 1878, and was a member of the Middletown & Wallkill Old School Baptist Church.

Three sons, two daughters, one sister and two half-brothers survive to mourn, but not without hope.

The funeral took place at his late residence, when a discourse was preached by Elder Benton Jenkins, after which his mortal remains were deposited beside those of his companion, in the cemetery of the New Vernon Church.

"Jesus, thou Prince of life,  
Thy chosen cannot die;  
Like thee, they conquer in the strife,  
To reign with thee on high."

DIED—At her home in Jones County, Mississippi, July 19th, 1888, Mrs. Melvina Melvin, in the seventy-fourth year of her age.

She joined the Old School Baptist

Church at Mt. Zion, Henry County, Alabama, in 1854, and was baptized by Elder Thomas Gray. In 1861 she drew her letter and moved to Mississippi. There being no church of her faith and order convenient for her to attend, she held her letter until 1881, when a small number came together and constituted Zoar Church, where she remained a beloved member in full strength of christian love until her death. She had been in declining health for many years with catarrh in the head. She was confined to her bed eight weeks, and her sufferings were great; but the patience with which she bore her afflictions gives us great assurance of her resignation to her lot. She was a kind and affectionate wife, and a devoted and patient mother.

She leaves a companion to travel life's uneven journey in sorrow; also six children, and many other relatives and friends, are left to mourn, but not without hope for her, as she left a bright evidence that she was an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ to an eternal inheritance. May God bless the bereaved friends, for Jesus' sake.

S. WOODARD.

## CHURCH HISTORY DEBT OF \$2000.

## CONTRIBUTIONS DURING SEPTEMBER.

GEORGIA—Mrs. F. M. Long 1, Elder J. R. Respass 5, Seaborn Crowley 1.  
 KENTUCKY—J. W. Stevens 50c, Elder E. S. Dudley 5.  
 LOUISIANA—J. C. Madden 1.  
 MAINE—Lewis Butler 5.  
 MISSOURI—Mrs. T. A. Easten 50c, A. W. Bloomfield 1.  
 NEBRASKA—Elder P. McCay 1.  
 NEW YORK—A. B. Dickerson 2.  
 NORTH CAROLINA—Miss Estelle Braddy 1, Mrs. David House 3, Mrs. Mollie Staton 50c, B. L. C. Bryan (additional) 3, Miss Maggie Best 2, Maniza Johnson 35c, Nancy Best 1.25, Mrs. Maczilla Everett 1, Justus Everett 2, George Sherrod 25c, Robert L. Taylor 25c, D. H. Latham 50c, Mrs. P. E. McGower 8, S. W. Outterbridge (additional) 10, H. B. Roberson 2, McP. Smith 50c, G. T. House 1, Mrs. A. Martin 25c, Mrs. Mary P. Wootten 2.50, W. K. White 1, Mrs. Araminta Pittman 1, J. H. Ashbrook 1, B. I. Ashbrook 2, Thos. Dicken 1, Wade Smith 1.50, Ruffin Smith 50c, Emma Drew 25c, Rebecca Draughan 25c, Winnie Applewhite 25c, M. D. Joyner 50c, Mrs. Pattie Vaughan 50c, Joshua Bell 50c, Conoho Church (in July) 4.50.  
 SOUTH CAROLINA—Jacob Rentz 2.  
 TENNESSEE—Mrs. Elizabeth Reagor 50c, Mrs. M. H. Landers 2, W. J. Landers 1, S. L. Landers 1, M. A. Welborn 1.  
 TEXAS—Amelia Barrow 1, J. M. Jones 1, E. J. Jarrel 1, J. R. Jarrel 1.  
 VIRGINIA—H. D. Hines 1.  
 Total .....\$ 89 60  
 Total previously published..... 424 75  
 Grand total to Oct. 1st.....\$514 35

## RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

Elder Levi Starling 2, J. G. Williams 2, S. L. McClane 2, D. M. Leonard M. D., 2, J. M. Bench 4.—Total \$12.

## YEARLY MEETINGS.

PLEASE publish through the SIGNS that the Old School Baptist Church of Olive & Hurley, Ulster Co., N. Y., will hold her yearly or two days meeting, commencing at 10 o'clock a. m. on Saturday before the first Sunday in November next (3d and 4th). Trains going west toward the place will be met at Olive Branch on the day before at 3:25 p. m. and 8:22 a. m. Trains coming from the west at Shokan, at 4:32 p. m. and 10:29 a. m. A cordial invitation is given to all lovers of the truth.

J. MATTHEWS, Acting Clerk.

## Williamston Academy.

The Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888, and continues twenty weeks. The Academy is situated in a grove of large oaks, and has a well of excellent water. The location is about a mile from Roanoke River, and ninety feet above its level.

There were seventy pupils, thirty-two male and thirty-eight female, during the past scholastic year. Pupils are carefully prepared for business, or for any class in College. Monthly Examinations and Reports. Discipline mild, but firm.

The Principal has a large supply of useful Maps and Charts and Scientific Apparatus, and a valuable Library of Three Thousand Volumes, to which the pupils have access without extra charge. A Graduate, with the First Distinction, of the University of North Carolina, he has about Twenty-Five Years' Experience in teaching in Graded Schools, Normal Schools, and Private Institutions, both North and South, having from one to about three hundred pupils. He has the strongest testimonials, as to his scholarship and character, from the best and ablest men in North Carolina.

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Board with Principal, including Lights, Fuel and Washing.....	50 00

The Entire Average Expenses, including Books, are about Seventy Dollars per Session of Twenty Weeks. This amount should be paid half in advance, and half at the middle of the Session.

## CALENDAR.

Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888.  
 Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.  
 Spring Session begins Monday, January 21st, 1889.  
 Spring Session ends Friday, June 7th, 1889.  
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 SYLVESTER HASSELL, A. M.,  
 Principal.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1888. NO. 22.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### REFLECTIONS ON EXPERIENCE.

THERE is a great deal of writing and preaching on doctrinal points among our people, and some good, sound Baptists, as we think, often drop this remark, that they would like to hear a little more experience, and not quite so much doctrine. Without any comments as to what doctrine or experience is, we will endeavor to proceed and treat on what we consider christian experience. In order to be on safe ground, it will be well for us and the household of faith to take along our measuring line; for in running over the field of God's glory we must wade the channel of his mercy, love and wisdom. It is also called a river of peace; and again, it is called a fountain of blood. So it may be readily discovered that if we are ignorant of this channel of mercy, this river of peace, this fountain of blood, our experience is worthless, no matter how much we may understand the doctrine, and seemingly proclaim it.

For a commencement we will quote the language of the apostle Paul to the Romans, vii. 9, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The first point to consider is what the apostle meant by saying that he was alive once without the law; and in order to arrive at the understanding we must use our measuring line a little, and measure very carefully. For the apostle positively says in another place, referring to the Ephesian brethren, as well as to all other believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, called of God, that in a state of nature they were dead in trespasses and in sins. Now it is our impression that the apostle had reference to the time when he was as yet unacquainted with the grace of God; and if so, we will have to measure a little, for it makes him both alive and dead at the same time, and in the same state. Well, but some man will say, "I thought you were going to treat on experience." Perhaps we had better measure; and lo, we find, according to modern calculation, the waters to be only a few inches deep, but clear as crystal. To come at the matter in a short way we will ask this question, How was it with us before we knew the Lord? I say us, because we read that they are all brought in one way, and all taught by one Teacher, and that there are none that know this way but those who are taught of God;

and, brethren, if we cannot agree about that way we should measure a little closer, and discover who is wrong; or who is not in the way.

In our first experience we will have to throw all ages of believers together; for some must go back to almost infancy, some to young men and women, some to middle age, and so on. The first impression that you were a sinner is what we desire first to examine. Where were you, and what were you doing? Were we in hearing distance, we could hear thousands of voices responding from different latitudes and from different employments, some at the table of chance, at the dance, in the field, in the kitchen, at home and abroad, at the mourners' bench, and some as full of religion as was Saul of Tarsus. The location matters not; but what was said, and who said it, is the point. The apostle said that he was on his way to Damascus. Ah, but he was a wicked man, a blood-thirsty man. Were you any better? I thought I was a good kind of sinner. I knew I was a sinner, but I was better than sinners in common, yea, even better than some professors of religion; but I was going to turn some day and get religion, and be a big christian. Then you did not think much of little christians, those that, if christians at all, were the least of all. No, they were not the characters that I had pictured out in my mind for christians. Then you did not love those little christians very much. No, I hated them with a perfect hatred. But you loved some professed christians? Yes, christians that lived up to their profession, and were honored by the king, and obeyed the laws of the land. Then you were the same character that Saul of Tarsus was when on his way to Damascus, and would have rejoiced to see the little christians all banished out of the land. Then we will have to set you down with ourselves, and all the redeemed of God, as belonging to the same rank and station as Saul when glorying in his own religion. You were alive to that religion, but dead to a knowledge of God, and dead in trespasses and in sins. But to the point. Who told you that you were a sinner above other sinners? Was it a preacher (some have been foolish enough to give the preacher credit), or was it your own bad actions, or the bad actions of others? We answer for all, It was that same voice that spake from heaven, that felled Saul to the ground, that humbled

you and me in the dust of humility, there to acknowledge our guilt and sins before God; and we were made to acknowledge,

"If my soul were sent to hell, God's righteous law approves it well." Saul's religion was a law religion, and so was yours and mine, in a certain sense. When we acknowledged the justice of that law in our condemnation, we died to that law. The law was holy, just and good; but we were carnal, sold under sin.

But let us return to that voice that spake from heaven; for there was power in that voice, yea, there was life. When that voice spake there was something made alive. Now, brethren, perhaps we had better measure again, for fear that we get into water deeper than we are aware; but we feel that we are on safe ground. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."—John v. 25. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." I became dead to the law by the body of Christ; and I have sometimes thought that I also died unto sin. But, brethren, let us be careful; for the river that Ezekiel saw, there were miry places adjoining thereto, and we desire not to lead nor to be led into those marshes. I believe that the child of grace is a two fold character; is now, and was when running wild in a state of sin and death. I would say to the timid and fearful, Do not get alarmed as yet, for the water can be measured, although it is swelling. "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."—1 Peter ii. 25. We acted just like sheep that stray from their owner, and must have had a resemblance to sheep in some sense of the word. The prophet says, "All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. liii. 6. If we were going astray in sin and folly, like sheep, and as sheep, we were not going astray as goats nor as wolves. We might have had the ferocious appetite of the wolf, and the howl of the wolf; for we were under the reign and power of sin and death. This wolf is and was our very nature; for by nature we were the children of wrath, even as others.—Eph. ii. 3. Herein is the compound man—a child of God not yet manifested, while as yet a child of wrath mani-

festated by a natural descent from Adam. That which is natural is first, and afterward that which is spiritual, after this order.

But some one will begin to inquire, "Where is the experience that you were writing about? You have gone off on doctrine." Perhaps we had better measure again. My friend, I want to put a few questions to you, and I want you to answer promptly. When in the dark maze of sin you heard a voice, what ears did you hear with? what eyes did you see with? Or can you only answer, as did the blind man, "One thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see?" Whom do you see? "I see Jesus, the Mediator of the New Testament." Then you saw him with the eyes of your understanding. You went astray with the eyes of your understanding darkened; you came back with the eyes of your understanding enlightened. You had eyes, ears and tongue, with all the organs of a man, but they were covered with a veil. You could not see, hear nor feel spiritual things. You thought you could, but you found it was natural sight. This you have learned. It was natural hearing. Do not harbor the thought that you went away a goat and came back a sheep, neither draw the conclusion that your vile nature was changed from a child of wrath to a child of grace, lest you get off into the mire and marshes of tradition of your fathers and perish, and lose a name and place among your brethren. But did not the child of wrath come back? We answer, Yes, but he came in irons; he was bound. He went away under the reign of sin and death; he was brought back under the reign of King Immanuel. Now come in the christian warfare, conflicts and trials, so much so that we cannot do the things that we would. This old man is put under subjection, and now the command is to keep him under. Ah, dear child of God, you have a work to do, and how often you feel that you must fall—that you cannot hold out another day; and neither could you, were not God working in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. You find a renewal of strength and fresh courage, remembering that it is written, "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger." But when you get a glimpse of that river that makes glad the city of God, its wondrous expanse, without bottom, brim or shore, you forget for the time

being that you carry about a body of sin and death, which makes us so often cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" O, brethren, are you waiting and looking for deliverance? The thanks are unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

I will have to stop writing from ill health, realizing that I have not done justice to the subject. Should I continue a few days in the same frame of mind, with strength given me, I will continue the subject.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Let me address you this morning as holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, and as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ; although ye walked in time past as other Gentiles, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom we also all had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others; but, as belonging to that race and people that were scattered among the Gentiles, chosen of God and precious, chosen in Christ before the world began, having now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. It is needful that we write unto you, and it is also needful that we carry our measuring line with us, which is the word of God. We have experienced that we are sinners, and have also experienced the grace of God working in us, magnifying our vileness and corruption, making us look exceeding sinful, and black as the tents of Kedar. This knowledge of our sinnership is given us of God, if so be that we are taught of God and led by his Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Now we should use the measuring line. We know that we carry about with us a body of flesh and blood, and a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be, because it is carnal, selfish, sold under sin. This mind is looking to self-interest and self-aggrandizement, the same rule of action that works in the children of disobedience. We will give an illustration. Suppose it be Saturday morning, the day of our church meeting, a day that is sacred to us. We are preparing to go to meeting; but how often it has been the case with us that a thousand things would loom up in the mind, this carnal mind of ours, to keep us home. Here is this and there is that which must be attended to, or there will be a great loss to us naturally. Why did not these things present themselves on some other morning or at other times so pressing? Ah, it is only the howl of the wolf. Remember, he is only put under sub-

jection; and O how he would like to be loose about this time, as well as at other times. But he is to be kept under subjection, and our bodies presented a living sacrifice, not a dead sacrifice, at the sanctuary of God's holiness, which is our reasonable service, thereby mortifying the deeds and desires of the flesh. This is a command given by the most high God to his saints, and is to be fulfilled in us, who are the called, not according to our works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, by that God who so loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins, yea, with an everlasting love; before all time. Now let us consider who the *us* is, and measure the characters by the word of God. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us." The *us* is that seed that shall serve him, and shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation. We find the *us* to be that people created in righteousness and true holiness. The same people are spoken of by the apostle Peter, and called "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye [the same *us*] should show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter ii. 9. The same *us* that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; the same *us* that are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; and the same *us* that are given the wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Hence we find the *us* to be the sons of God by order of generation and regeneration, being born again, not of corruptible seed, by choice and by predestination. Taking this view of the subject, we may readily understand what the apostle means when he says, "hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Now, why all this? Let the apostle answer: "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 7.

Now let us consider the great High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus the Lord. He came down from heaven. He came to his own, but they did not receive him. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." He came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every

one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." Again, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And again, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring." "I lay down my life for the sheep." "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." In the last day, that great and notable day of the Lord, "there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." That fountain was Christ the Lord. In him was the life of his people. In him was the seed elect. He died—his life was laid down. His people were dead—their life was given to the stroke; hence they were dead. But on the third morning, according as it had been foretold by the prophets, he arose from the dead, being quickened by the almighty power of God, a mighty conqueror over death and hell. It was the same life taken again, even the life of his people. "And hath quickened us together with Christ [preserved in eternal grace], and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." To whom be glory? To God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, throughout all ages. Amen.

But now arises the question, Have we experienced the grace of God in our hearts? Have we experienced our vileness and utter helplessness? Ah, I know that I am vile, and at times I seem to know and realize that my vileness and my sins have been put away, at least they have been hid from my view for the time being; and more, the load of sin that bore me down even unto death, acknowledging the justice of God in my condemnation, has been carried away into the land of oblivion, and is not to be found any more at all, although I have searched diligently for it. One thing I do know, that I love God's people. This is one evidence in my favor. These people are my people, and their God is my God. Other people have love and wonderful affection for their cause, and I have been made to inquire closely into the nature of their love, when I have found self the great moving cause. We love God because he first loved us, and must exclaim, in the language of the poet,

"Why was I made to hear thy voice,  
And enter where there's room?  
While others, left to their own choice,  
Would rather starve than come.

"'Twas the same love that spread the feast

That sweetly forced us in;  
Else we had still refused to taste,  
And perished in our sins."

Brethren, love one another fervently, with love unfeigned; for by this it is made manifest that we are the

sons of God. Love to all the household of faith, who love God and our Lord Jesus Christ in truth and in sincerity.

B. MARTIN.

ASHLEY, Ohio.

KINDERHOOK, Mich., Sept. 4, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have been feeling very gloomy to-day, but this evening I am feeling very happy, and feel like writing a little; and as dear Elder Caudill, of Kentucky, wanted me to write for publication, and sister Emma Smith wanted me to write my experience, I thought I would try and write of what I hope and trust the Lord has done for me. But if it is not fit for publication, throw it to one side, and I shall not feel bad about it.

When I first saw myself a great sinner in the sight of God, I was about eleven years old. The first thing that came to my mind was, If I should die, what would become of me? This troubled me a great deal. I tried to pray, but my prayers did not seem to rise higher than my head. I did not dare to kneel down to pray, for fear some of the family would see me. I would go to the barn, and other places, and try to hide from them. I thought that might be the reason why my prayers were not heard (for I did not think they were), because I did not kneel down. I remember one time in particular of trying to pray. I went to the barn, but did not dare to kneel down, but thought I would get as near that position as I could; so I took a spring wagon seat, put a half-bushel measure on one end of the seat, and sat on the other, and put my arm on the half-bushel measure, and laid my head on my arm. I had just got fixed when my oldest sister came to the barn and wanted me to come to the house to help her get supper. I wondered if she knew that I was trying to pray. I hardly dared to look her in the face, for I felt ashamed for her to know that I was trying to pray. I felt sure she must know why I was in such a position, and I thought I would not try to pray again. This was in the fall of the year. I thought when winter came there would be protracted meetings, and I would get religion. I do not remember, but think I went a few times, but did not get religion. I then thought I would wait till the next winter. But I thought it would be so long, and before that time I would probably be dead, and where would I go? I continued in this state of mind through the summer, trying of myself to get religion. I would read the Bible, more particularly the New Testament, but could not understand it. It had better been blank, for it now condemned me. When winter came I went to meeting, but with no better result than the winter before. I thought there was no hope for me, that I certainly would die without a hope in Christ, and if I did I would certainly go to the place of everlast-

ing to:ment. But I continued trying of myself to get religion till in the winter before I was sixteen. I went to the meeting, and when they called for mourners I went to the mourner's bench night after night. I had never dared to do so before; but all the young people went, so I went too. They were all weeping. I tried to weep, but could not. The rest of the young people, one by one, would talk and tell of their religion; and I thought that I too had at last got religion, but could not tell when the change came. So I soon made up my mind that I did not have it. Then I thought myself worse than ever, for I had been playing the part of a hypocrite. A week or two from this time I went to meeting one Sunday evening. There were a good many people there. There were two couples sitting in the seat, and when the preacher got through preaching he said he wanted all to stand up that thought they were christians. The three that were sitting with me all arose to their feet, with a good many others; but I hesitated a minute. I thought those three that I was sitting with would notice that I did not arise to my feet, and they knew I had made a profession, and what would they think of me? They were very dear friends of mine. But before the people sat down I arose to my feet. I knew I was not a christian, but thought I would be before I saw the preacher or people again. This was March, 1884. Now I had told a lie; for by standing on my feet I said I was a christian, and I knew at the time I was not. O, I was such a sinner that everything I would do was sinful and wicked. I was away from home at that time, and on Monday morning I knew the washing was to be done; but there was such a weight on my mind that I was sick. I thought if I only were at home I would not need to work if I did not feel like it; but being away from home I knew I must work, and it seemed as though I could not. I went to work and washed, but I never suffered so much in one day before. It seemed as though night never would come. All I could say throughout the day was, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." But finally night came, and I went to bed, and knew that on Tuesday I must iron. But if I felt as I did on Monday, how could I ever perform the duties of the day? I was so worn out it seemed that I should not be able to get up the next morning. But I got up the next morning, not thinking of what I had suffered the day before. After breakfast the man and his wife went away to be gone for the day. The boys went to their work. I did the morning work and went to ironing, and just as I began I felt so free, so happy, and I thought, Where has my weight of sin gone? I tried to find it, but could not. Such a happy day I never had before seen. I tried to realize where the load of sin had gone, and how it went, but could

not. All I knew was that it was gone. The work was easy, and the ironing was done in just a little while. This was a very happy day, for I knew Jesus had spoken peace to my poor, troubled breast. This was the first day of April, 1884. I now could say with the poet,

"Tongue cannot express  
The sweet comfort and peace  
Of a soul in its earliest love."

I felt that I was not saved by works, or anything that I had ever done, but by free grace. One week from Saturday I went to covenant meeting at a Missionary Baptist Church, where I had attended Sunday School and meeting for some time. The door of the church was opened for the reception of members, and with some others I was received as a candidate for baptism. They did not ask me to tell my experience, but only asked me a few questions; so I did not tell my experience. On the Sunday following I was put under the water, and also nine other people. I will tell farther along why I say I was put under the water, instead of being baptized. I do not say that the nine were not baptized, but I do not feel that I was. I reckon the rest are satisfied. Feeling that the Lord had done so much for me, I was taught that I must do a great deal in return. I was not taught this at home, for my father and mother were Old School Baptists; but the Missionary society gave me a missionary box to put missionary money in. I attended the Missionary meetings, mite societies and Sunday School, and thought I was doing a great deal. But I have learned differently since, for which I feel very thankful; for I feel of late that the Lord has been teaching me instead of man. I continued in this way about three years. During these three years I hated the Old School Baptists with cruel hatred. I heard father and mother talk a good deal about them. They received letters from sisters Mattie Derr, Mattie Thomas, Kate Spurgeon and Emma Smith, and they would always want me to help them read the letters when they got them. For this reason I hated to have a letter come from them, for I did not see what there was in them that father and mother thought was so good. Mother took the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and was very careful to save every one. I asked her one day why she was so particular to save every one—if she thought her children would ever want to read them. She said that it might be they would at some day. But I told her she need not worry about that. I feel very glad now that she was so choice of them, for they are dear to me now. This is like many other things that I once hated, which I now love; and the things that I once loved, I now hate. About a year ago I began to be dissatisfied with the way I was living. I saw that I was in Babylon; but how to get out I did not know. I tried to hate the Old

School Baptists more than ever, but could not; for when the SIGNS OF THE TIMES would be brought from the post office mother would look it over, and I was almost as anxious for it as she was; but I would wait till I was in a room alone to read it; and if any one would come in while I had it, I would throw it down carelessly, so they would not know I had been reading. I had heard but one Old School Baptist preacher, for there is not any in our county. The one that I heard was Elder Swart-out. He preached at our place once, but I did not pay much attention when he was preaching, for I thought he was one of those narrow, contracted Old School Baptists. At the end of these three years that I have been speaking about, and I began to see that I could do nothing of myself, I began to doubt, and to fear I had never been born again. This troubled me a great deal. I prayed to the Lord that if I was one of his humble poor, I might have a clear evidence in some way or other; that I might have a dream, or it might be revealed to me when awake. I had not thought anything about it for a few days till one night I had a dream. I dreamed that I went to a neighbor's house to stay all night with a lady friend, and her father had gone to town. When he came home he was drunk, something he had never done before. He did not want me to stay, so he took after me, and I ran to go home, but lost my way, and came to a hill, where were briars and mud and water. I had never seen such a place before. In order to keep out of his reach I must climb down this rough and very steep hill. I started, and after a long time got to the bottom; but my clothes were torn and muddy, and my face and hands scratched and bleeding. I had never seen such a looking object as I was. I was ashamed to go home, for I did not know who I might meet on the way. I looked ahead of me a little way, and saw a small lake, the nicest body of water I had ever seen. It was very clear, and the banks seemed to be a carpet of moss. I thought I must get across the water in some way or other, for the man might be close to me, although I could not see him. I plunged into the water, not knowing how to get across; but I got across, and when I got out of the water I had never before been so clean in my life; and I felt very happy, for I thought the man could not get across the water. I did not think of my dream till about the middle of the forenoon; but when I thought of it I felt that was certainly all the evidence I need to know that I am one of God's humble poor. Although I felt I was the least of God's children, I felt that I was chosen before the foundation of the world. To think one so sinful and wicked as I am was chosen before the foundation of the world, makes me feel very unworthy. In June, 1888, the Sandusky As-

sociation was held at Kelly's Corners, Michigan, about fifty miles from our place. I did not want mother to go alone, neither did I want to go; but rather than have her go alone I went along. There I met sisters Emma Smith, Ella Smith and Mattie Derr for the first time; and when I heard them talk, I did not wonder that father and mother liked to get letters from them. I felt that I also would like to get letters from them. Sister Emma Smith promised to write to me, for I began to feel that I did like the Old Baptists a little. But she did not write for almost four weeks after she got home, and I thought she did not want to write, or that she had forgotten me, or that I was not an Old Baptist, and she did not care to write. But her letter came at last, and it was well worth waiting for. Such preaching as we had at the association I had never heard before. But the strangest thing to me was when the ministerial committee made out the programme for the afternoon; and when the people were called together, it was announced that Elders Cole and Yoder would preach that afternoon. Elder Cole was to preach first. He did not know it till it was time for him to preach. I thought he would not say very much, not having had time to study a sermon, nor even time to find a text. He took for his text Romans viii. 17, "And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." But before he got through preaching I found I was mistaken, for it was the most glorious sermon I had ever heard. The preaching that I had been used to hearing took the preacher all the week to learn what he was going to say on Sunday, and then had to take his paper in the pulpit with him, for fear he would forget part of his sermon. I did enjoy the association very much. I thought indeed it was an association, for I had never before met a people that were so sociable and friendly. When I got home I got to thinking how little and unworthy Elder Sherwood seemed to feel. I thought he was so good, and such a good preacher; if he was so unworthy, what must I be, so sinful and wicked? I doubted and feared that I was not one of God's little children; that I was being "April fooled" about myself; for if I ever felt a change, and felt my sins forgiven, it was on the first day of April, 1884. When I thought of being "April fooled," something seemed to say to me, "The Lord does not do such things as that. You are one of God's little children." This made me feel ashamed, and I thought I would never doubt nor deny my blessed Lord again. But I do not know; for Peter said he would lay down his life for Christ's sake, and yet after saying this he denied the Savior three times before morning. I thought that I must join the Old Baptist Church, although I knew I was not worthy a place

among so blessed a people; for they all seemed so good, and I so vile and full of sin. How could I leave all the things that I would have to leave, such as Sunday Schools, mite societies and missionary meetings? Although I did not believe in them, yet I was tempted with many things of this kind. I know there is no wrong in being tempted, for Jesus was tempted like unto us, yet without sin; but I yielded to temptation so often. I thought the young people of our place would shun me, and would not have me in their society. "When I would do good, evil is present." "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." When I thought of so many oppositions of the flesh, I almost gave up to stay with the Missionary Baptists; but every time this passage would come to my mind, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Now I do not care for the things that I felt it hard to give up, for I believe them to be some of the unclean things that Paul speaks of here in this passage. It took me about two months to decide whether to join the Old School Baptists or stay where I was. I tried not to think about it nights, but I could not sleep; and when daylight came I could think of nothing else. I did not want to go to any place nor have company, but just be in some room by myself. I did not want any one to say anything to me, nor did I want to say anything to any one. At last, the Lord being my helper, I decided to join the Old School Baptist Church, for I felt that they were the people of God. I thought I would join at the first opportunity. I did not think it would be very soon, for the nearest church to our place was forty-five miles. But when sister Emma Smith's second letter came, she wrote to me about the Mount Salem Association, to be held near Cromwell, Elkhart County, Indiana, and wanted me to be sure and be there, and to come to their house on Wednesday, as they expected Elders Caudill and Bretz at their place, to have meeting on Thursday. I thought the Lord was going to answer my prayers, for I knew that if I went to the meeting I would have opportunity to join the church. I had prayed that I might have an opportunity to join the Old School Baptist Church before I died, and if it was the Lord's will that it might be in the near future. I had thought that if I ever joined the church I wanted Elder Bretz to baptize me. If I went to the meeting I would start the next Wednesday. This was about a week, and it seemed to me that I never before thought of so many things in one week. I thought I would not join the church till I had asked the Mis-

sionaries to take my name from their church book, and it seemed to me that I never could do this; but I did, for the Lord gave me courage and strength in this great time of need, as I did not have enough courage and strength to do this of myself. I believe this was the greatest cross I ever bore. I went and told them that I wanted them to drop my name from their church. They wanted to know my reason. I told them that I could not believe as they did, and their church was no home for me, and I felt that it was my duty to join where I could feel at home among the brethren and sisters; also a number of other things, which space will not allow me to tell. They asked me a few questions, and I answered them, but they did not see proper to drop my name that day, it being their church meeting day, but left it till the next meeting; but I do not know what they have done. I truly believe that the Lord was in all the work, and that it was predestinated; for I got the letter informing me of the meeting on Tuesday evening, and the next Saturday was the covenant meeting day; thus giving me an opportunity to ask them to drop my name, that I might start for the meeting on Wednesday. It was all done in so short a time that I could hardly realize it all. After telling them that if the Lord was willing I was going to join the Old School Baptist Church, I could go with a clear conscience. Then another trouble came to my mind. I knew that if I joined the church they would want me to tell my experience, and how could I get up before a congregation of strangers and talk? But when the time came they did not seem like strangers, but the nearest and dearest friends that I had on earth. Then another thought came to me. I had been baptized once, and I knew they would not accept of me unless I was baptized by one of their preachers. I did not want they should, but I feared this would be mockery; for Jesus was baptized but once. But I left this in the hands of God, and trusted that it would be made plain to me before I went to the meeting; and it certainly was. On Monday the thought came to my mind, Have I ever been baptized? To be sure I have been put under the water, but have I ever been baptized? This seemed to ring in my ears. I thought, Was the man that put me under the water called of God to preach? I fear he was not. The man would not preach unless he got so much money a year. If he could not get it in one place, he would say, he would not preach there, but go where he could. What was he preaching for? The Lord knows; and I know he is in the hands of an all-wise and just God, who will give him the reward that he should have. When I was put under the water I did it only because some other young people were to be baptized. I did not think of it as being a command or duty, but

thought if I was a christian I must join a church, and did not stop to think what church to join; only I had always gone to the Missionary Baptist Church, and there was where I would join. But this put an end to all my fears on the subject of baptism. When Wednesday morning came mother and I started for the meeting, and got to sister Spurgeon's about dark, and stayed there all night. The meeting was at her house on Thursday. A few of the brethren and sisters of the Elkhart Church gathered together. Elder Caudill came, but Elder Bretz did not. This was a great disappointment to me for a little while. Perhaps you may think I was personally acquainted with him, but I was not, although I had heard a great deal about him. When we learned that he could not be there, mother asked me if I would join the church and have Elder Caudill baptize me. I told her I thought not. But the meeting commenced, and Elder Caudill took for his text the words, "And I wept much." After he commenced preaching I thought, How could I go on to the association and not be baptized? O I could not. The preaching was so good; it was manna from heaven to my poor, hungry soul. After the preaching sister Emma Smith asked me if I would like to join the church. She knew by my writing to her that this was my intention. I told her I would. They wanted me to tell my experience. I did not think anything about being among strangers now, but felt very well acquainted. I felt that we were all of one mind and one spirit. I told them a part of what I have written, and they accepted of me as a candidate for baptism. I requested that Elder Caudill should baptize me, for I thought it did not matter who it was, so as it was one called to preach. We immediately went to the water, where I was buried with Christ in baptism. I had never seen Elder Caudill till that morning, but he will ever be held dear to me while memory lasts. This seemed like Sunday to me, and indeed it was a sabbath, a day of rest to my poor soul. One week from the next Saturday I was received in full fellowship with the Elkhart Old School Baptist Church. On Friday we went to the association, and I heard the gospel of Jesus Christ in its fullness and beauty; and if there is such a thing as heavenly times on earth (and I believe there is), we had one at the association.

I might write as much more, and then not tell all of God's dealings with me; but I have already written too much.

Now, dear brethren Beebe, if you think this will be of any comfort to the children of God, please publish it; but do as your better judgment dictates. Please correct all mistakes, if they are not to numerous, and excuse poor writing.

Your very unworthy sister, if one at all,  
GEORGIE LINN.

GLENWOOD, Tex., Dec. 20, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As I am preparing to send on a remittance to the SIGNS for myself and others, I will yield to the inclinations of my mind and pen a few of the thoughts that have been running through my mind since I received the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for the fifteenth of December, subject to your disposition.

We are informed by one of God's inspired servants that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." I understand by this that the Scriptures are sufficient for the church, as a guide or instructor, in doctrine or practice, guided, of course, to a proper understanding thereof by the Holy Ghost. Then what we need to know in reference to doctrine, we have set forth from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The same in reference to practice, both as individuals and churches. The Baptists have long professed to believe the "Scriptures to be the word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice." Then this only and perfect furnisher tells us again that "Whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." The child of grace who would save himself from this "untoward generation," must take heed unto himself and unto the doctrine, and continue in them. Notice, it is "the doctrine," and not the doctrines, in the plural. Jesus said that his doctrine was not his, but the doctrine of his Father which sent him.—John vii. 16. Then the doctrine to which we are to "take heed" is a particular doctrine; and so far from being ours, that our Master tells us, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." So we are not at liberty, however inclined we might be to please our fellow-men by a compromise, to yield one point of truth in this doctrine, nor to compromise in the least with error. One of the inspired judges has instructed us in that code of laws laid down for the government of Christ's kingdom, that "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds."—2 John 10. "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." We are to believe him to be the only true and living God, the Creator and sovereign Ruler of all things, as is taught in his inspired word. This we can only do by the corresponding

testimony within. It requires the work of the Holy Spirit to teach us our utter nothingness, and to wean us from our natural disposition to arraign the eternal God before the bar of human reason, and to enable us to say, "Thy will be done." Now it is my desire to notice some of the things the Lord has revealed concerning himself and his works. We are informed that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." Again, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Again, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." With this inspired testimony with reference to the existence and purpose of all things, how dare the servants of God say that some things came into existence from or by some other cause, or will answer some other end than that for which they were created, or that they originated without a cause, and will answer no purpose in the end? God's word tells us that he created all things. I dare not, if I knew I would gain the love and esteem of the whole world, deny it. The same word also tells us that they were created for his pleasure. I dare not deny, but must, and with grace afforded by him, will always contend that they have and always will answer that end. God's word tells us that "I am God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." I dare not, in order to please my Arminian friends, say that he is subject to, and is moved and changed by, our actions; for, from this fact, that the Lord does not change, I know that the sons of Jacob are not consumed. God's word tells us to "Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." I dare not say, to please the Arminian world, that God has declared what comes to pass, dependent on conditions; or, to please those who deny that God has declared or decreed all things that come to pass, say that his counsel only embraces some things, and the whole end is not declared. The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he har-

deneth." Now I dare not, to please the Arminians, say that God's mercy, being extended to man, depends on his compliance with certain conditions; nor, to please the believer in a limited predestination, say that he has mercy on whom he will, and permits all others to be hardened; for the Scriptures just as much say that "whom he will he hardeneth," as it says that "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy." Notwithstanding the "old stereotyped line of argument," "Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" is modernized to read something like the following, "If this be the case, God should be as well pleased with his wicked creatures as with his good; otherwise you say he despises the work of his own hand;" or, "If such be the case, where is the unity of God?" &c., be brought to bear with all the vim as in the days of the apostles; yet I dare not yield the point of truth taught, that God "works all things after the counsel of his own will."

Our perfect and thorough furnisher further informs us "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I dare not contradict it to please the Arminians, nor modify it to keep on good terms with the believers in a limited predestination. In working all things together for good to his elect, God has done many things that carnal reason says are unjust. This is an old charge against the doctrine of election and predestination, and that by many who profess to take the Bible as the man of their counsel. Yet that inspired book practically sets forth that doctrine in God's choice of national Israel, to the utter rejection of all other nations; and this, too, before their existence as a nation. The Holy Ghost by the mouth of Moses tells us, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." We are taught in the above that it was the Most High who divided to the nations their inheritance. It was he that separated the sons of Adam, and gave them their bounds. All this was done with a view to their good, who was and is his "portion," his "people," "the lot of his inheritance." "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." To this end it was necessary that this "lot of his inheritance" should sojourn in a strange land four hundred and thirty years (I mean for their good), according to God's word to Abraham. Now it was the Most High that separated the sons of Adam, and gave to the nations their inheritance. Surely he gave to Egypt his inheritance (among the other nations), and that according to the number of the children of Israel.

It surely was he who arranged all that routine of causes (in which the envy, hatred, covetousness and lust of men and women were portrayed) to bring about the desired end; that is, the landing of the children of Israel in Egypt at the appointed time. Although the sale of Joseph to the Midianitish merchants was meant for evil by his brethren, and was a voluntary sin on their part, yet God meant it for good. What is plainly set forth to my mind here is, that it was in the minds (meant), a previous consideration with these brethren of Joseph, to do this wicked act. The same thing was a purpose with God; that is, it was his plan, in this way, and by this act, to do his people good (save much people alive), and constitutes a connecting link in that chain of events necessary to bring about the proposed end. Now it was God's purpose (and that for the good of his people, and for a purpose of his own glory), after his people had become securely settled in this "strange land" (in which, no doubt, they were well contented, seeing no occasion for a wicked king in Egypt), to raise up a wicked king; also to raise up a prophet and leader for his people, in the person of Moses. It was God's purpose that this man Moses should abide for a time in the land of Midian, where the Lord called him, and commanded him to go to Pharaoh, and with the elders of Israel to say to Pharaoh, "Let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God." "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand." Again, "And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand; but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my first born. And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me. And if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first born." I conclude that some of the modern teachers would have reasoned thus with the Lord, had they been in the place of Moses, "Why should I go, Lord? Where is the need of it, since you will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he will not let thy people go?" Which is equivalent to saying, "Jehovah, what doest thou?" But Moses had seen too great a manifestation of God's glory and majesty to thus question his works. "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering; he stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing; he bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them; he holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it; he hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end; the pil-

lars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof; he divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud; by his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent," &c. Though "the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy [Ahab's] prophets," he hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. God did predetermine, before he formed the earth, or anything pertaining thereto, that his only begotten Son should be born into the world, and from his infancy suffer persecution at the hands of wicked and cruel men; that he should be led of the Spirit up into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and gave to Pilate the power to deliver him up to the Jews. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Though the Lord has done all these things, and many more of the same nature that we might bring to bear, what is poor, puny man, which in his best estate is altogether vanity, is reckoned as the small dust of the balance, as the grass of the field, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field, that he should say, "Jehovah, what doest thou?" For it is he "Who hath measured the water in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing; and Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity."

It was in my mind when I commenced this article to write more particularly on the bounden duty of the servant of God to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and how, by taking heed to himself and to the doctrine, he should both save himself and them that hear him; and how that he is forbidden to compromise with error in any form. But having been forced to lay down my pen several times, it has now been many days since I commenced, and I have read several articles on this same subject, so I have not written exactly as I thought I would in the outset. And now, as I have written as much as I have, I will refer to one more passage of Scripture, add a few remarks and close. "For God hath put it in their

hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." I am utterly unable to discover a line of distinction in the Scriptures as drawn between the decrees of God. Whatever was foreknown of God must come to pass accordingly. Nothing comes to pass without a cause, and every effect has a routine of preceding causes. God was before all things, and by him all things consist. Hence he is the great first cause of all causes.

Dear brethren editors, I have laid this aside a time or two, intending not to send it; but I concluded again to forward it to you, to be disposed of as your better judgment may dictate. I have no apologies to offer for the great truth herein referred to, but I have thought that perhaps you have sufficient matter on the subject, more condensed and ably written than mine; for as before intimated, I have had to write hurriedly and by piecemeal. In reading the late editorials on the subject of predestination, I feel that I have been comforted and edified, and feel to thank the Lord for your boldness, and to pray that he may by his Spirit give you all necessary strength and boldness for every duty that he may require at your hands in the future.

Yours to serve in the cause of truth,

H. B. JONES.

SHERMAN, Dec. 4, 1887.

MUCH ESTEEMED BRETHREN BEEBE:—I have had a desire for some time to write to the household of faith through our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The reason I call it our family paper is because the doctrine of the family of God is and has been set forth in it. I have read a great many other periodicals called Baptist, but there is something lacking in them; that is, they seem afraid to come out straight on the point of doctrine that, it seems to me, distinguishes us from the Arminian world; and when the Baptists get ashamed of the faith which was once delivered to the saints, I think the time has come when the love of many has waxed cold. There seems to be a desire to please men rather than to feed and comfort the household of faith. We should take heed to the doctrine, and continue in it. If the Bible teaches that men are saved on the merits or works of men, let us preach it in that way; but if it is solely the work of our blessed Redeemer, let us preach it in that way. If the Lord is God, let him be God.

Dear brethren, it is the truth that we want to know. I cannot see how brethren can call themselves Baptists in truth, and yet deny what the Baptists have ever held, and what has ever been the dividing line between them and antichrist; that is, the predestination of God in all things. Take that out, and you have the

Arminian creed. I was once a member with the Arminians, and have heard some of their ablest preachers on the subject of predestination, and I cannot see any difference between them and some of our brethren who hold that God has predestinated all the good things, but all the bad things, as they call them, he only permits. Well, I confess that I cannot see how our brethren can believe such doctrine, and yet say that God has all power. The Arminians believe that the devil was once an angel in glory, but fell; but some believe him to be God's eternal opposite, a self-existent devil. If this be true, God was wrong when he said "I am the first." O, brethren, cannot you believe the Lord rather than men? These artificers in religion are trying to ensnare the saints and lead them off from the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They say they believe that all the vessels of honor will be saved and taken home to glory; yet they say that God did not determine the fall of man.

I know that this is a doctrine hated by the world at large; but he that is a friend of the world is the enemy of God. I heard it said thirty-five years ago that the Baptists believed in God's predestination of all things; but I did not believe it until years after, and then by carefully searching the Bible I found it there. Then I looked back to my own travels, and found that every spiritual blessing I had enjoyed was accompanied by something that, from a human standpoint, would be called wicked acts. I remember that once I said to myself I would not preach, and that God could not make me do so. I meant that I would do as I pleased. Yet that was God's way to teach me that he would do all his pleasure, and he made me willing to discharge my duty. I felt that the good Lord was with me, and blessed me. At another time I was going to let the brethren know that I could preach. I had my sermon all fixed up and ready; but just when I was ready to hand it out, the good Lord shut my mouth; so I found that the whole disposing was of the Lord, and can give him all the glory, feeling the truth that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. I have learned that the Savior was correct when he said, "Without me ye can do nothing." Vain are the works of man; yet how prone we are to follow the doctrines and commandments of men, rather than take the Bible as the man of our counsel. I have tried with a prayerful heart, as I believe, to preach the truth; but I cannot preach the truth in its beauty unless I set forth the sovereign power of our great Creator. If Satan be, as some claim, self-existent, who can tell but he will dethrone God, and then what would become of us who are resting in hope that when done with time and temporal things we shall rest with God eternally? To know that the Lord is God gives me strength to bear all the trials and

troubles of this life, with the assurance that as he lives and reigns, so will we. O blessed thought, that we have such a glorious King, immortal, invisible, the only wise God our Savior.

Dear brethren, do not fear what man can say about the doctrine; for if God be for us, who can be against us? My heart has been made glad to know that there are some in this evil day who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Amidst all the lozings and lozings we find some yet contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. God has moved his servants on the walls of Zion to sound an alarm, to cry aloud and spare not; calling the attention of Zion to the truth, that they may know nothing but Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life. O that God's people may all return to the good old way, and not have men's persons in admiration because of advantage. Some want to preach a doctrine that the world can understand; but the gospel can never be known by the world; they cannot receive it as truth. These things are not taught of man, but God reveals them to us by his Spirit, and enables us to feast on them as the good things of the kingdom. Ye tempest-tossed children of Zion, who have waded through many trials and troubles, and have eaten the passover with bitter herbs, the time will soon come when the Master will say, Well done, good and faithful servant; thy Father calls, Come home. Then you can say, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith." I have no other desire than the welfare of Zion and the glory of my heavenly Master. For if I should gain all the praise of men, and yet know that I had preached a falsehood, what comfort would I receive? O that I may ever preach the truth, and then all will be well with me. To know the truth, and to be enabled to proclaim it, is the greatest blessing we can ask.

Dear brethren, when I get my mail matter, and find in it the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, I first read it over; and if I am in the dark, it is sometimes the case that some of the writers say things that cause me to take fresh courage by the way. Then I seem to have the wings of faith, and spar away, and forget that I am on the earth. O how good it is to find some one who can tell my feelings better than I can. Often have I thought, Why has the good Lord ever been gracious to me, a poor, rebellious sinner? I can say that in all my trials and sore troubles he has been my helper. He has been my strength in weakness, my light in darkness; yea, he has been altogether my Savior, my God, my Deliverer, my Buckler and my Shield. Shall I then limit the holy One of Israel? God forbid. It is said that some will limit him, but may it never be said of me. May we always ascribe all power, might and dominion to the God of our sal-

vation; for great and marvelous are his works, and that my soul knoweth right well. His mercy endureth forever. This I have learned by experience. Surely it was not for anything that I had done, that the Lord of glory bestowed such a blessing upon me; for I sometimes feel that he has blessed me with an understanding of the work of the Spirit. He gave me sight to view myself a lost and ruined sinner, and made me glad to see that Christ died for me. O what manner of love is this, that God should take one of a city and two of a family and bring them to Zion, and that I should be one of that number, to praise him eternally? Can it be that I shall one day see him as he is and be like him?

Some say that if God has predestinated all things, that makes him the author of sin. The reason they say thus is because they judge him from a human standpoint, and not as God; for what God does is right. Some things that are wrong for us to do, are right for God to do. He has said, "Thou shalt not kill;" but he says, "I kill, and I make alive." We must remember that God is above all law, being under law to no being. One day while in company with a Universalist preacher, he said to me, "If you had all power in heaven and in earth, would you not save every body?" My answer was, "Yes." "Well," said he, "are you more merciful than God?" I replied that I was man, while he is God; and what seemed right to me, was not so with God, who has said, "For my ways are not your ways; neither are your thoughts my thoughts." And when we judge, we judge with human judgment; but not so with God. He is one mind and none can turn him. He calls things that be not as though they were. Who can understand that? Great is our God, and greatly to be praised. Let all the house of Israel praise his name and glory in all his works.

To be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ is something more glorious than all the glory of this world combined. Yet such is the lot of sinners saved by grace. The Lord will be their strength and their guide even down to old age. Though they pass through many sore conflicts and trials, yet he has promised that they shall not be tempted above that they are able to bear.

Well, brethren, one and all, write on, and strengthen the dear editors of the SIGNS, and comfort the saints of our God, while you praise and glorify the name of our Lord. I will bring this imperfect letter to a close, asking you, brethren Beebe, to correct all mistakes, should you publish it. If you do not, it will be all right with me, for I feel that it is not worth room in our paper. May the Lord of life and glory enable you to bear all the trials and turmoils of this life; and may you and I, with all the

family, be gathered home to immortal glory.

Your unworthy brother,  
JOHN L. LUDWICK.

ROCKVILLE, Md., Dec. 6, 1887.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed find the amount due for the year 1888, for our precious medium of correspondence, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. This precious medium comes richly laden with good news from a far country, a country not seen by the natural eye of man. Since I sat down to write, the words recorded in the last chapter of Proverbs, fourteenth verse, have come into my mind. "She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar." This world affords us nothing spiritual. All that nourishes the spiritual man must come from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

The periodicals published by the religious world are full of the works of the natural man, and contain no food for poor, helpless me. The SIGNS, which was started fifty-five years ago, the year of my birth, contains water for the thirsty and food for the hungry soul. Thirty-three years ago, in a dream, I read the word "warning" in large black letters, printed on top of this precious medium, in the house of sister Rosetta Chandler. At that period of my life I was a rank Arminian, full of zeal. A few months after I had the dream, I was made to see that the power was not in man to direct his steps. By power from on high I was made to love to read the SIGNS, which previously I had only looked over. The preaching contained in that paper I had heard but once, even with the natural ear, when a school girl. I read in that paper the experience of a minister, in a poem, which touched me, because mine was not so deep. I spoke of it to my mother, who said, "That is the experience of a minister." Her words afforded me some consolation. But I was afterwards led into deep things, which I cannot forget. I have felt his power, seen his glory, and have tasted his love.

"Oft in the assembly of his saints  
Have I beheld his smiling face,  
And oft have seen his glory shine  
With power and majesty divine."

When I was baptized in the Fullerite belief, the Bible was certainly a sealed book to me on every subject except baptism, although I read much in the New Testament. The doctrine of election, predestination, and the final preservation of every saint to glory, to me is a very precious doctrine. I am a firm believer in the predestination of all things, the evil as well as the good. If it were only what I have seen or can see as right or good, that works for my good, I would certainly give up in despair, for then could I have no hope at all. I do not charge the great and loving God and Savior with my sins, nor even father Adam; for they are all in and of myself.

"Satan, vain is thy device;  
Here my hope rests well assured;  
In that great redemption price  
I see the whole secured."

Dear brethren, I did not intend to write so much, but my mind went back into the past, to the time when the SIGNS was first made so very precious to me, and I could not help writing it out. The SIGNS is indeed a precious messenger to the lovers of the truth, especially to those who, like myself, are deprived of natural hearing.

I remain your sister in hope of a life beyond the tomb,  
RUTH ADAMSON.

GENEVA COUNTY, Ala., March 13, 1888.

DEAR EDITORS:—On the fifteenth of the present month my time runs out for the SIGNS. I would have sent on my remittance sooner, but have been sorely afflicted with risings, so that I could not get out to get your list of subscribers increased; but I intend during the year, if I live, to see what I can do for you in the way of new subscribers, for I feel like every lover of the truth ought to feel deeply interested in the publication of the SIGNS, and make every effort to help sustain you, and not let the paper go down. How can we do without it? I for one never shall, as long as the good Lord blesses me with means to pay for it. I do rejoice that you, dear editors, would rather give up your paper than cease to contend for the truth. May the great God that has created all worlds and all beings, and holds the destiny of every created thing in his own power, and that by an unalterable decree, put it in the hearts of his children to sustain you. It is a fearful thing to turn the plainly written word of God into a lie. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." Has not the time come when some who call themselves Primitive Baptists will not endure sound doctrine, and have turned their ears away from the truth, and been turned to fables? My heart sickens at the thought. I am not surprised at the multiplied perversions of the plain word of God by the world of will-worshippers, who have not the law of God written in their hearts; but for those who claim the name Primitive Baptist, to spend their time and talents in trying to set at naught the decrees of the Almighty, and in trying to establish creeds of their own, is painful indeed. But we learn that the time was to come when some should depart and go out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not of us. We have but to cast our eyes abroad to see God's decrees written upon every unfolding bud and falling leaf. If there is any one thing that I do rejoice in more than another, it is that God rules and reigns. If I were not made able to trace the hand of God in all

my troubles, trials, losses and crosses, it seems that I would faint by the way. Yes, my times are in the hand of the living God, and he enables me at times, with David, to rejoice that it is so. I must close. Please find inclosed a money order, for which continue the SIGNS to the same address.

N. A. MEEKS.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y., Sept. 10, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I inclose the experience of a sister in Christ, which if you see fit you may give a place in the SIGNS for the comfort of those who are led in the same way, out from those who have constantly to work, first for salvation, then to keep it; showing conclusively that they do not believe in salvation by grace, nor cease from their own works, and hence cannot be believers in Christ in that sense; for we read that they that believe do enter into rest. But this one in her talk and writing, I think, is strong in the Lord, and has knowledge of the power of his might, having been brought to rest in Christ, and also to take the yoke of Jesus, finding rest to her soul. Our souls are comforted, brethren, because of the goodness of the Lord unto us, this making eleven that have been added to the churches I serve, by baptism, since February last.

J. D. HUBBELL.

ELDER J. D. HUBBELL—DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST—If one so weak and sinful as I may thus address you. I thought to write some of the Lord's dealings with me, a sinner, in bringing me (if I am not deceived) to hope in his mercy and to unite with his dear people. And while thinking about writing, I tremble, lest I should deceive one of the Lord's dear children; for my unworthiness comes before me, and if I write I must trust in the Lord for strength.

I have been a sinner all my life, and it seemed as though there was no mercy for me. When quite young I used to attend Methodist meetings, and some of my friends joined them, which made me feel bad; but I could not see as they did. I could not do anything to save myself. I believed it must be the work of the Lord alone, by grace, and not of works, lest I should boast. I could not do as much as lift my eyes up to the great God on high, I was such a sinner. Only burdened sinners can know how I felt. It is all summed up in these words, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Sometimes these comfortable words would come to me, "Be not afraid," and I would for a time forget the wormwood and the gall. Then again the thought of my wretched state would make my mind dark, to think how much I had sinned against my God. I sometimes felt I could eat the very dust of the earth, which was the ser-  
pents' meat, I was so sinful, and was

ready to sink in everlasting flames. Then came these words with joy to my poor soul, "Comfort ye my people, saith your God." If I am saved, it is by the Lord alone. Yet sometimes I would read the Scriptures, and the blessed promises would appear as a great light; yet I could find no rest, when I would go to Methodist or New School Baptist meetings, for there was so much for me to do. I could not even speak a word. But when the truth and holy word came, it seemed as though it took root, and, I hope, everlasting root. O how I longed to be baptized and have a home with the dear people of God. I then believed the Old School Baptists to be the church, the ground and pillar of truth. I trust I was brought to Jesus Christ, to obtain that rest which he only can give a laboring and heavy laden sinner, to believe on his name, and cease from my own works. It was a precious season to me when the light of the great Redeemer shone in my heart. My soul had longed for rest, which is promised them that follow him, and I was made to rejoice, as I was privileged to follow my Lord in baptism. And now I feel to say, dear brother, my sins are all forgiven. Yet I tremble at his word, while I feel that the yoke of my Master is easy, and his burden light. I desire to walk as a child of the light, yet I am so prone to evil that I know only in his grace shall I prevail. I long again to hear you preach, and to see the gathering of the Lord's people into his house, the church. Do with this as you please.

Your unworthy sister,

IDA J. BANKS.

BROUGHTON, Ill.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—As the time is about up when I should send in my remittance for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, if I would read and enjoy the precious truth contained in its columns, you will find inclosed two dollars, with my best wishes for you and all the household of faith.

Dear brethren, I am getting old and feeble, and do not expect to be here long. It is very likely that this is the last time I shall ever send you a communication. But let me say to you, dear brethren, that through the columns of the dear SIGNS I have been made acquainted with many dear and precious brethren and sisters in the Spirit; and though I have never met them in the flesh, my tears have mingled with theirs many times in the Spirit, and I have been made to rejoice and return thanks to God for his great love wherewith he loved us. Pray for me, dear brethren.

Yours in hope of life eternal,

W. W. GAYLE.

THE EVERLASTING TASK FOR ARMINIANS.

WE have received from the bindery a fresh supply of the "Everlasting Task," bound in a better style than formerly, which we will sell at the same price. For full particulars see advertisement on last page.

## CIRCULAR LETTERS.

*The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, convened with the church at Fishing Creek, Dorchester Co., Md., on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, October 24th, 25th and 26th, 1888, to the churches of which she is composed.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the goodness of our covenant-keeping God a few of us are spared to meet again. Many changes have taken place since we last met; but all these things were ordained from the foundation of the world, and no change has taken place with him who says, "I am God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Dear brethren, who profess the name of Christ, and believe in the absolute predestination of all things (for the God we profess to worship is a God of purpose, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, and says, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"), let us briefly consider some of the language of Peter and John as recorded in the third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

Peter had preached to those present, saying, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." When the Lord is present, it is a time of refreshing with us. The Lord was with Peter and John, and they said, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." The Jews were so offended at this preaching that they forbade their preaching any more in the name of Jesus. O how thankful we should be to God that we are thus far permitted to worship under our own vine and fig tree.

Let us see what effect the threats had on these apostles. "When they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God [not to the Jews] with one accord [they were agreed—no jangling with Peter and John], and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ." They were gathered together. What for? "For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Let us trace the apostles a little farther. We find them in prayer to God. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word." "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and they spake the word of God with boldness."

Then the account is given of

Ananias and Sapphira his wife, who kept back part of the price. Dear brethren, let us not keep back part of the truth, so as to suit some one's notion; but let us speak the truth as the apostles and prophets did. Let us follow the old landmarks, and consider well the charge that Paul gave to Timothy, "before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word." God forbid that his servants should preach anything but "the word." Yea, the apostle says, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." This same apostle said, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." In the beginning of his epistle to Titus he says, "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."

Brethren, let us be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Preach the truth as it is taught in God's word; "be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." Teach the disciples of Jesus to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded them. He says, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." May we seriously consider the words of the apostle; and when we are called hence, when done with time and temporal things, O that we may be enabled to say that we have fought a good fight. May the Lord teach us how to pray, and to speak to his glory and honor. May he enable us to worship him in spirit and in truth, and to have no confidence in the flesh, is our prayer, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

JOSEPH L. STATON, Mod.  
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

## CORRESPONDING LETTERS.

*The Salisbury Baptist Association, to the several associations in correspondence with her, addresses the following letter.*

BRETHREN IN THE LORD:—There are times when we weary with the toils and cares and disappointments of life, and feel like retiring to some quiet retreat for a season of spiritual comfort and repose. As the Master with his little company of disciples, oftentimes oppressed in spirit, and wearied with the noise and commotion about him and the striving of the people, would withdraw to some

desert place, or to the seclusion of some sacred mount, to refresh themselves and rest awhile, so we have found it in our hearts to retire for a season to this somewhat isolated spot, and the people have followed and come to us from every quarter. The Master undoubtedly knew that some of them had been long time fasting, and that if they should be sent away they would many of them faint. So he commanded that they should sit down, and that such provision as was at hand should be divided and distributed to the multitude. Then he blessed the provision, so that the little morsels became a plenteous repast; and we were abundantly satisfied with the goodness of his house. There has been bread enough and to spare. So we have been refreshed, and our spiritual strength renewed. We sit under the light of his smile, with great delight and thanksgiving, to rest awhile. Although at an extreme point of the associational bounds, more than a hundred people have made their way from the churches and from corresponding associations to share in our privileges. A number of ministering as well as other brethren from abroad are with us. Not a jarring note has been heard. Peace and undisturbed fellowship prevail throughout our borders. The churches show spiritual prosperity quite generally, and an increasing interest in the cause. Such has been the mutual enjoyment in our meetings, and the evidence of christian love and fellowship among us, as to attract the notice of others, who could neither understand nor appreciate the things that God reveals to them that love him. Even destruction and death have heard the fame thereof with their ears, while they have not known the power thereof.

We have appointed our next session with our sister church at Messongoes, Accomac Co., Va., to commence on Wednesday after the third Sunday in October, 1889. We shall hope that brotherly love will continue, and that we shall be permitted to meet in the enjoyment of that love again.

JOSEPH L. STATON, Mod.  
J. H. TRUITT, Clerk.

*The Oconee Old School Baptist Association, to the sister associations with whom she corresponds, sendeth christian salutation.*

BELOVED BRETHREN:—Through the abundant mercy of a covenant-keeping God we have been permitted to hold another session of our body. All our churches have been represented, and their letters bring the good news of peace and love in their midst, with some additions to their numbers of such as the Lord would have to be saved, for which we desire to give thanks to the great Head of the church, who has declared in his word that "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me," &c. The business of the body has been

transacted in harmony and love, and we have been much refreshed and comforted by the coming of your correspondents, who came to us laden with the precious truth of the gospel. The preaching has been in power and plainness, much to the comfort of the children of God. Not a discordant note has been sounded, but all spoke the same truth, teaching the same blessed truth, that all the Lord's people are taught of the Lord, and great shall be their peace. Yet our correspondence has not been as full as we desire. We greatly desire a continuance and increase of correspondence, and will return the same as far as we are able.

The next session of our body will be held with the church at Big Creek, Oconee Co., Georgia, eleven miles southeast of Athens and eight miles south of Winterville, on the Georgia R. R., from Union Point to Athens, and eight miles east of Watkinsville, on the Covington & Macon R. R., commencing on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1889, when and where we hope to meet you again. Until then, farewell.

W. D. CHANDLER, Mod.  
F. M. McLEROY, Clerk.

## INQUIRIES AFTER TRUTH.

HAMILTON, Ohio, Nov. 4, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:—I wish to request that Elder S. H. Durand express through the columns of the SIGNS his views upon the following Scripture, and oblige a constant reader. The first is Revelation iv. 6, especially upon what is represented by the four beasts. The next is Revelation xii. 4, especially the first part, in regard to representation of the tail of the dragon, and what are the stars of heaven that were cast to the earth. Also, Revelation xiv. 4, in regard to the application of the first fruits. Part of these Scriptures have been in my mind for some days past, and Elder Durand will confer a favor if he be led to write upon them.

In the hope of joys in the realms of a cloudless day,  
G. W. FULKERSON.

## CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish in the SIGNS and request correspondents in future to address me at Sutherland's Corners, Ontario, Canada, and you will oblige  
FRED. W. KEENE.

ELDER R. Speirs having changed his residence from Martinsburg, Iowa, to Hedrick, Iowa, desires his correspondents to address him hereafter at the latter place.

"THE EDITORIALS."  
FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES.

WE still have a few copies of these books on hand, in all the varieties of binding. For prices and particulars see advertisement on last page.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., NOVEMBER 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS.

"AND have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."—Eph. v. 11.

In compliance with the request of a highly esteemed brother, we submit the following reflections in connection with the subject embraced in this expression of the inspired apostle. While every word of that record which God has given is full of important truth and comfort to the saints, it must be remembered that there is a very great difference between the divinely authorized words of Scripture and the interpretation which our finite understanding may attach to those words. Not only must every scriptural expression be considered in the connection in which it has been placed by the inspiration of the Spirit, but that Spirit must take and show unto the saints all truth, or they are unable to receive its real meaning as the testimony of Jesus. May that infallible Interpreter direct us in the consideration of this subject, so that its correct signification may manifestly display the glory of the King who reigns in Zion.

In the preceding context the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus are directed to be followers of God as dear children. That there may be no uncertainty in regard to the walk and conduct thus enjoined upon the followers of God, the path is definitely marked out both by positive injunction and by specific enumeration of the things which are inconsistent with such walk. As in all the commandments of our Lord, love is the first and most important principle presented. Indeed, without this fruit of the Spirit no word or action can be acceptable service to the Lord. Even though one could speak and do all the wonderful and desirable things cited in 1 Cor. xiii. 1-3, without this divine principle he still is nothing profited. The infinite perfection of this love as manifested in our gracious Lord is cited as the pattern to be observed by his followers. No other example could be so well understood by every one who has seen the fullness of perfection in the face of Jesus as the only Savior of sinners. While others may find license to sin in the assurance that salvation is secured in Jesus to every one for whom he suffered, all who are led by the Spirit of God long for deliverance from all unrighteousness, because they love the holiness which has been revealed unto them in their perfect Redeemer. The Spirit of God never leads to the service of sin; and they who are led by that

Spirit do not need to be terrified by threats of divine vengeance to deter them from indulgence in wickedness. They love righteousness as they are moved by the indwelling principle of holiness which is within them. Their bondage under the power of the law of sin in their members causes continual grief to them, and it is not the fear of future punishment which distresses them. By reason of the principle of love to holiness which is their vital element they must necessarily hunger and thirst after righteousness. This is the peculiar mark which identifies those who are included in the blessing pronounced by our Lord, as recorded in his sermon on the mount.—Matt. v. 6.

The specific instruction and admonition contained in the immediate connection of this text, like all other commands from the mediatorial throne of our Lord, enjoins upon his followers no duty but the voluntary obedience which consists in working out that salvation from sin which God works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.—Phil. ii. 12, 13. There is no room for doubt that every one who feels oppressed by the power of sin in his members, has the love of holiness wrought in his heart. On the other hand every one who desires to live in sin, and is only moved to refrain from it by the fear of punishment, is certainly destitute of that love of holiness which characterizes those who are born of God. A clear understanding of this test will identify every subject of divine grace, and expose every false professor of the religion of Jesus Christ. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Rom. viii. 9, 14. Every one who longs for deliverance from the power of sin, which he feels as a burdensome oppression, is led by the Spirit of God; for sin is not oppressive to the carnal mind. The man who refrains from sinful actions either from the hope of reward or the fear of punishment, shows no love to holiness. Finite judgment can only determine motives as they are developed by the action of men; God judges the hearts and thoughts which are not yet manifested by action. It is at this judgment throne that all his saints are continually tried. They do not have to wait until some future period for approval or condemnation. The present experience of the answer of a good conscience in obedience, or the rod of chastening in disobedience, is ever with those in whom Christ dwells.

In their daily warfare against the evil which besets them, the saints are not moved by fear of future punishment, but by the indwelling desire to be free from sin. The same Spirit which inspired the divinely recorded law of Christ, as it is found in the Scriptures, is the vital principle which leads all who desire to be free from sin. This truth is implied

in the reference to the fact that the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, to whom the admonition is addressed, already know that the characters who continue in outbreaching sin, as described in verse five, have no "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Even in the days of the apostles it was suggested as a deduction from the doctrine of salvation by grace, that the saints should continue in sin that grace might abound; but that false inference was condemned by the inspired word which still refutes all such charges, saying, "God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"—Rom. vi. 2. There is a vast difference between the feeling of the law of sin working in our members, and that willing obedience to sin which is by inspiration denominated living in sin. Indeed, without the consciousness of the power of sin still dwelling in our carnal nature we could have no knowledge of that warfare to which the saints are called. But there was need that the saints should be warned against being deceived with vain words. Being "by nature the children of wrath, even as others," the deceitfulness of sin would still bewilder them when left to their own judgment; hence it was needful that they should have the inspired direction plainly recorded for their guidance. In following the path thus divinely authorized they who were sometimes darkness, are enabled to "walk as children of light." The fruit of the Spirit is not in living after the flesh, with all its abominations, but "in all goodness and righteousness and truth." Walking in the Spirit the saints shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.—Gal. v. 16.

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." It is evident that there can be no fellowship or agreement between the holy principle of divine perfection, which is Christ in the saints the hope of glory, and the sinful propensities of the flesh. The admonition in our text is not limited in its application to those works which are done under cover of literal darkness. As the saints are children of light as much in the night time as in the literal day, so the works of the flesh which are done in open daylight are as much works of darkness as those things which are covered under the shadow of literal night or hidden under the obligations of secret oaths and pledges. Everything which lacks the authority of the word of the Lord is included in a scriptural sense among the works of darkness, which are all unfruitful. As the inspired law is perfect it necessarily follows that whatever is not found enjoined in the directions of our King is included among those unfruitful works of darkness with which the saints are forbidden to have fellowship. The most deceitful of these prohibited works are those religious observances which seem

very commendable in the estimation of natural reason. It will not be difficult for the saints to detect the work of the adversary in tempting them to participate in openly avowed immorality; but when they are solicited to take part in something professedly good, which is approved by the religious world, they may not so readily detect the darkness in which such works originate. However any religious or moral proposition may appear innocent or even commendable in the sight of reason, it is a work of darkness to the followers of Jesus, unless it bears the clear and unmistakable seal of his divine commandment. With such unfruitful works they can have no fellowship without denying their allegiance to the Lord in whom they trust for righteousness and salvation from sin. Frequently the temptation comes to the saints in the form of a suggestion that there is no harm in lending their countenance to this or that innocent action or organization. They may be able to see nothing positively objectionable in the suggestion, and may be led to participate in the thing proposed. After becoming thus involved they may find that they are entangled in unforeseen results which are very trying to their minds and perhaps destructive of their peace and comfort. It is always safer to reject every proposition which has not the authority of our Lord. If it is for the benefit of his saints he has enjoined it upon them. That commandment will be brought to their mind by the Spirit, and its observance will be to the declarative glory of his name. Whatever he has not commanded is forbidden to those who love the Lord. It is better to ask for his direction than to trust to our own reason. Since he is the true Light of the new creation, it must be that all works which are not authorized by his word are "unfruitful works of darkness." As such they are forbidden to those who would follow the gracious Redeemer. The example given by the divine Leader of his people is their perfect guide in all their sojourn in this world of tribulation and conflicts. Divine love shines in all the record of the manifestation of God in the flesh; that love must be the motive principle in every action of such as would be followers of him. This will determine in the individual case of every one whether he is led by the Spirit of God, or governed by the carnal selfishness which is entirely destitute of the divine love by which all true children of God are distinguished.

"But rather reprove them." In reproofing the unfruitful works of darkness it will not be necessary that the saints should make such a tumult as would attract the attention of the world. The reproof which is most effective even in the natural world, is that quiet and unobtrusive presentation of the right way in walking uprightly, in con-

trast with which every evil way is manifestly condemned. In the light of the gospel kingdom there is no departure from the perfect law of the Lord but that is sharply reproofed by contrast with the perfect obedience which is revealed in our great Example. The quiet unpretending deportment of that humble saint who is led by the Spirit of Christ, is a living reproof of all unrighteousness, and especially forcible is such rebuke to those walking in darkness, who have the love of righteousness in their hearts. Indeed, it is not clear that the law of Christ contemplates the reproof of any others but such as are included in his kingdom. There is no need that any provision should be made in the gospel dispensation for the condemnation of the natural world who are already under the curse of divine justice. The wrath of God abides upon all who believe not the Son, and such shall not see life.—John iii. 36. By this test those who have everlasting life are manifestly separated from such as remain in the night of sin and death. The conduct and conversation which is ordered by the word of the Lord reproofs every work of darkness; and all who have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them are by that Spirit enabled to receive that reproof.

When this rule is applied to the discipline of the organized church it must not be forgotten that the vital element of that heavenly kingdom is the love of God. Observance of the mere letter of this or of any direction of the law of Christ without the recognition of the love which distinguishes this law from all others, is at best but the shadow without the substance of obedience to the authority of our King. While professing allegiance to him it is really merely mocking him with the scarlet robe and crown of thorns, while denying him any sceptre but a fragile reed. In vain do even his own redeemed people worship him by compliance with the letter of his commands while moved by the spirit of carnal wisdom and seeking the gratification of selfish emotions. Nothing can be obedience to his law unless the love of Christ is the motive which prompts the action. The Spirit of Christ has no fellowship with anything which he has not authorized; but that Spirit always directs in love all that is done in obedience to his commandments. The love of Christ is not to be made a pretext for disobedience to his plain directions; nor is personal partiality to be mistaken for that divine principle. True love to one who is overtaken in a fault, will not shrink from the effort to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness. Genuine brotherly love will always be guided by the spirit of meekness, in the consideration that we also are subject to the same frailty under which our brother has fallen. It is only as led by this love that we are able to obey the injunction, "Bear ye one

another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."—Gal. vi. 2. In obedience to the spirit of the law of Christ genuine brotherly love appears even in the reproof which is administered to those who walk in the unfruitful works of darkness. Such reproof is the clearest evidence of earnest and self-sacrificing desire for the welfare of the erring one. Selfishness would suggest that we might incur censure and ill will by refusing to countenance the departure of a dear brother from the pathway of obedience; but the love of Christ moves us to sacrifice every personal consideration to obedience to his divine commandment. Perhaps evil speaking is as common a form of transgression as any work of darkness in which the saints are engaged. No verbal reproof will sink deeper in the heart of a subject of divine grace when engaged in this unfruitful work, than perfect silence on the part of the one who hears such words. It is a true saying that two parties are necessary to the circulation of an evil report. There must be a hearer as well as a speaker. The report will not be circulated unless it is repeated. Let every one who would follow Jesus be careful thus to reprove this work of darkness, and there will be little disturbance from this source in the organized church. The same principle is applicable to other unfruitful works of darkness. Refusal to participate in them is the most effective reproof of them.

It is manifestly inconsistent for those who profess to hold the law of Christ as perfect, to claim that there is any good reason for them to retain allegiance to any other organization besides the church which he has established. No claim will be made that the saints should be bound by any obligation to do wrong; and if their love to their Redeemer is not strong enough to induce them to keep his perfect commandments it is difficult to understand how any earthly obligation can secure that result. Surely, no real lover of Jesus will admit that he owes stronger allegiance to any earthly organization than to the Lord in whom he hopes for salvation from sin. It should be remembered that the law of the gospel kingdom is that love which is the fruit of the Spirit. In the execution of that law all violence is excluded; for the Lord has said, "I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise."—Isa. lx. 17, 18. In this holy city of our God, all is liberty to the blessed inhabitants. The spirit of obedience is wrought in every saint. So it is written, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."—Rom. xiii. 10.

#### THE WEEKLY "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

IN our Oct. 15th issue we inclosed a supplement announcing our intention of publishing the SIGNS OF THE TIMES an eight-page weekly during the year 1889. To do this will greatly increase our expenses, and with our present circulation we cannot afford to do it; but if our brethren and friends will assist us by procuring a sufficient number of *new* subscribers, we shall be able to continue it weekly in subsequent years. To assist them in doing this, we make the following extraordinary offer:

From now until the first of next January, any one who is a paid-up subscriber may forward us *new* subscribers at the rate of one dollar a year. Any one who is not now a subscriber can have the advantages of these terms by sending us two dollars for their own subscription, and one dollar each for all subsequent *new* names.

There seems to be some misunderstanding among the brethren about these terms. The price of the paper is two dollars a year; but if any of our paid-up old subscribers can procure new ones at two dollars a year, they have the privilege of retaining one dollar for their trouble, and sending us the other dollar for the new subscriber; but no one can send to us and procure the paper for themselves for less than the regular price. If our old subscribers see fit to sacrifice their own dollar, and collect new subscriptions at one dollar each, that is a matter of their own choice; but if any new subscriber wishes to get the paper at a reduced rate, he must get it of some of our old subscribers, for he cannot procure it from this office for less than two dollars a year.

These terms will not be continued after the first of January, 1889. All new names will be entered on our list as soon as received, and credited to the end of 1889, the balance of this year being sent them free. The cash must invariably accompany orders under these terms.

We have been sending the paper to a good many at half-price, who have been represented as not able to pay the full amount. All such have been supplied at an actual loss to us, even while publishing semi-monthly, and as a weekly the burden would be greater than we feel able to stand; therefore we cannot renew them for less than the regular rates.

We shall lose on every *new* subscriber taken at one dollar a year, but we hope to retain a sufficient number of them on our list in after years at regular rates to make us whole on what we lose the first year. Still another and principal reason for receiving *new* subscribers at one dollar a year is the hope that our subscribers may by this means be able to increase the circulation of the paper to twice what it was at the commencement of this volume. They have already increased it about one-third, or we should not dare undertake publishing it weekly without an increase of subscription price; and as soon as they have doubled it we will lower the price to one dollar and fifty cents a year, although weekly at two dollars is cheaper than the paper has ever before been published

#### MARRIAGES.

At the residence of the bride, Prince William Co., Va., Oct. 10th, 1888, by Elder Wm. M. Smoot, Mr. J. M. Ellicott and Miss Mary E. Barbee, both of Prince William Co., Va.

By the same, Oct. 14th, 1888, at the residence of the bride, Prince William Co., Va., Mr. Frank D. Milstred and Miss Sarah E. Davis, both of Prince William Co., Va.

On Tuesday, Oct. 16th, 1888, at the residence of Wm. R. Rees, near Newark, Delaware, by Elder E. Rittenhouse, Mr. Alexander Frazier, of Kenton, Delaware, and Miss Eliza Wallace, of the former place.

At the bride's residence in Baltimore, Md., on Wednesday p. m., Sept. 12th, by Elder F. A. Chick, John D. Linton and Cornelia F. Search, both of Baltimore.

By the same, on Thursday evening, Nov. 1st, at the bride's residence, Baltimore, Md., Edward A. Johnson and Mary E. Scott, both of Baltimore County.

#### OBITUARY NOTICES.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It has again fallen to my sad lot to chronicle another death for your obituary columns, that of **Mrs. Bailey**, wife of Joseph Bailey, of Utica, N. Y.

Sister Bailey was born in Peterborough, Northamptonshire, England, and was the daughter of the late Daniel Madison, whose obituary appeared in the *Gospel Standard* for May, 1876. Although he was such a marked trophy of rich and reigning grace, our dear sister claimed no inherent goodness, but had several years ago been made to mourn deeply over her condition as a sinner, and traveled in terrible darkness and distress of mind, I think, two or three years, when the Lord broke her fetters, setting her needy soul at such happy liberty that she ever afterward rejoiced in that salvation which is of grace, and grace alone. She was received into our little church, and baptized by brother S. H. Durand, about five years ago, since which time she has walked with us in gospel fellowship. Sister Bailey was of very bright intellect, quick witted and jocular, which caused her many a sorrow, so that, like the rest of us, she had a thorn in the flesh to contend with and struggle against. She was the subject of much physical suffering, but had her seasons of great rejoicing and confident trusting in the Lord. I have heard her, while under terrible operations performed upon her person, talk of the goodness and preciousness of Jesus and his faithful promises, often quoting that ever-precious and to her favorite hymn, 751 of Beebe's Collection, and especially verses 3-5, which for want of room I will not quote, but hope the reader may look them up. Her last sickness was short, dying of diphtheria at 10 o'clock p. m. on Sunday, Oct. 21st, 1888, in the forty-sixth year of her age. Though delirious at times, her mind never wandered from the sweet theme and subject of grace and salvation through Christ alone, while in spiritual patience she possessed her soul. She left several requests and arrangements to be made, to which her kind, patient and devoted husband applied himself and carried out to her utmost wishes. In her last hours she called for the reading of John xvii. and Romans viii., greatly rejoicing in the same. She has passed from us to the spirit land, there to cast her crown at Jesus' feet, and crown him Lord of all. The little church, with her dear husband, five children, and many friends on each side of the great Atlantic, are left to mourn, but not as those without hope, assured that our loss is her eternal gain. Her funeral was well attended by sympathizing friends on Tuesday, Oct. 23d, brother Robert Alexander officiating.

That our hearts may all be one in the petition that those her dear ones left behind may be sharers in that salvation in which she triumphantly rejoiced, shouting victory through Jesus' precious blood, is the one desire of her sister in Christ,  
 LYDIA ALEXANDER.

UTICA, N. Y., Oct. 30, 1888.

DEPARTED this life Oct. 5th, 1888, at his residence at Roxbury village, Delaware County, N. Y., brother **John Powell**, aged eighty-eight years and three days, surviving his wife over six years. The funeral was held at the house Oct. 7th, where a very large concourse of people were assembled to pay their respects to the departed. His disease was that consequent to old age.

Brother Powell made a public profession nearly sixty years ago, uniting with the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury, of which he was a member at the time of his death, dying, we believe, in the triumphs of faith. It was my privilege to see him occasionally during his last days; and when earthly things had nearly lost their worth to him, he remembered with sweet gratitude of heart the blessedness of that hope which the Lord is unto his people, and would quote Scripture very accurately when he could not retain earthly names at all. It was always a pleasure for me to sit by his bed and converse with him on the subject of the blessedness of christian joy beyond the dark rolling river of death. His house was a home for the Baptists, and is still kept open for their comfort by his two daughters who lived with him at the time of his death. He was cared for in his last days by his two daughters, who had always lived with him at home, and a son, who also lived with him at the time of his demise, and also a widowed daughter living in the village. He was in need of constant care, for the last year particularly, night and day, as is quite common with people at an advanced age when near the end of their life. We trust that the Lord, who was pleased to prolong his days to so great an age, will reward those who attended upon him for their labors of love, and sanctify to them their deepest distress. He was the survivor of several brothers and sisters, and leaves three sons and three daughters to mourn, besides other relatives, as well as the church; but we trust their loss is gain to him.

ALSO,

QUITE suddenly, at Boiceville, Ulster County, N. Y., Oct. 12th, 1888, after two weeks' illness of typhoid fever, **Mrs. Orland Perry**, aged thirty-seven years.

Mrs. Perry was the only daughter of Harmon Fisk. She leaves a father, a sickly mother, a husband and one lovely little girl of four years, with many friends, to mourn. She was not a professor of religion, but generally attended our meetings; and I have often observed, while preaching, her sober and thoughtful attention, and sometimes a silent, unbidden tear steal its way down the face. May we not believe that she was one of those that fear the Lord and thought upon his name, whom the Lord will spare in the day he makes up his jewels?

My prayer is that the Lord may sustain the weakly body of the sorrowing mother and father, and especially the suddenly afflicted husband and child, and may he lead them all to follow him in his appointed ways, and know no will but his, if it is his will. Her funeral was largely attended at the house on Sunday, Oct. 14th, 1888.

J. D. HUBBELL.

KELLY'S CORNERS, N. Y.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—VERY DEAR BRETHREN:—Please publish in our valuable paper, the SIGNS, the following obituary of our beloved and much esteemed brother, **Louis Wright**.

The subject of this notice was born in

Virginia, March 26th, 1813, and died at the residence of his son, A. J. Wright, August 9th, 1887, aged seventy-four years, four months and thirteen days. The deceased emigrated to Licking Co., Ohio, in the year 1833, and was married to Miss Elizabeth Stewart, Oct. 29th, 1835, with whom he lived pleasantly until death severed the nearest tie on earth, and took from him, I think, as good a woman as lived in the flesh, leaving him a lonely widower until his death. To them were born seven children, one having preceded them to the spirit world, leaving six highly respected children, four sons and two daughters, to mourn the loss of their dear earthly father. Two sons and the two daughters, living in Nebark, were not permitted to be with their dear father and assist in caring for him in his last sickness; but his sons here, and sister, with his daughter-in-law, did everything that could be done to make him as comfortable as possible. He received a good hope through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus of the forgiveness of his sins through that blood that speaks better things than the blood of Abel, and was baptized, I think, by Elder J. W. Biggs, and united with the Harmony Predestinarian Baptist Church over fifty years ago. About thirty-five years ago he with his wife, sister Wright, moved their membership to the Hartford Predestinarian Baptist Church, in which they remained worthy members until called from the church militant to the church triumphant. He was sound in the doctrine of God our Savior, and steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of the same. He worshiped God in the spirit, rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh. I was very intimately acquainted with them, having served the church of which they were members about twenty-three years, and I never want to forget their kindness to me and the Baptists at their home. The dear old brother was a kind friend to me, and we miss him much indeed; for after the death of his dear wife he would come with his horse and buggy and take me to the different churches that I was attending, and wherever I wanted to go to meeting he was always ready and willing to go with me. How much I miss him no one knows but myself, and I always think of him with respect and gratitude. While we are called to mourn our loss, we mourn not as those who have no hope, being confident that our loss is his eternal gain. Sleep, gently sleep, dear brother, until the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God shall call you to behold your King in his beauty and be clad with immortality; for the truth of God is that those who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. The writer tried to preach a sermon on the occasion, after which his remains were laid in the Trenton cemetery.  
 L. B. HANOVER.

SUNBURY, Ohio.

**G. A. McQuien** was born June 3d, 1860, and died August 30th, 1888, aged twenty-eight years, two months and twenty-seven days.

Last spring he was made to see his lost and helpless condition, and it pleased the Lord to give him a good hope through grace. O how comforting is the thought that he is now at rest! His disease was malarial fever and flux. His sufferings were great, but he bore them without a murmur. He often said that if it was God's will he was ready and willing to go. He leaves a young wife, one sister, one brother, father and step-mother to mourn his departure. We feel that our loss is his great gain.

ALSO,

**Mandy Dell McQuien** was born August 28th, 1884, and died September 2d, 1888, aged four years and five days.

Little Mandy was a very intelligent child, and of deep thought. She has

often, since she was two and a half years old, come to me and said, "Ma, I want to go to heaven and be with Jesus. I've stayed here so long—when can I go?" After her little sister Gerty died she did not seem to desire to live. I never have seen either old or young grieve for the dead as she did during her last illness. A day or two before she died she said, "Ma, is my time up?" I asked her, "For what?" She replied, "For heaven." She told us she had lived too long, and had to die. She seemed to know from the time she was taken sick that she would not get well. None but parents who have passed through the same trying scene can truly sympathize with us.

ALSO,

**Gertrude Evangeline McQuien** was born Feb. 7th, 1886.

She was as a sweet, fragrant flower, that only buds to wither and die. In my weakness I have wondered why our dear Master always takes the most affectionate and gentle of a family. They stay just long enough to enlist the strongest ties of affection, and as a fading flower they pass away. But I know they are with Jesus, and my heart's desire is that I may be submissive to God's will in all things. Gerty's age was two years, seven months and seven days.

MRS. M. J. McQUIEN.

VINEYARD, Ark.

**Mercer V. Robertson** was the oldest child of Jesse and Jane Robertson, of near Plevna, Madison Co. Ala. He was born January 29th, 1865, and died April 9th, 1888, after an illness of ten days.

Thus has passed away from earth to mansions of the blessed one of nature's noblest sons, a father's pride, a mother's joy and comfort; but, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," we are not left to bear this heart-breaking sorrow without hope. The sweet and heavenly words which fell so calmly from his dying lips mingle a taste of joy in our overflowing cup of sorrow, and fall in our heart as dew of heaven upon the plants.

A few days after Mercer was taken sick, and before the family felt any particular uneasiness about him, he called his dear old grandmother Smith to come and sit on the bed by him, for he wished to talk with her and his mother. He began to talk of his departure, which he felt to be near at hand, and told them of his heart troubles on account of having from early childhood felt himself a sinner, poor and helpless and vile; and how he had tried to pray, but did not know that he had ever prayed acceptably. His mother asked him if he could claim a hope. He said he did not know that he could, but that John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren;" "and I know that I do love the children of God." These, with many other like precious words which he spoke, give us to believe that his name was written in the Lamb's book of life. His general deportment was so manly, moral and noble, that all who knew him loved and trusted him. He had just gone into the mercantile business, with bright prospects of a long and useful life; but the blessed Redeemer had prepared better things for him, and he must go and enjoy them. Then, dear parents, let me beg you to be reconciled to God, and lift your trusting eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh your help.

ALSO,

**Belle Robertson** was the oldest daughter of Jesse and Jane Robertson. She fell asleep in Jesus on April 23d, about 9 p. m., just two weeks and a few hours after her brother had died. No pen can portray the anguish of the fond parents when they were forced to drink this double cup of sorrow. Two such loving and lovely children, torn from the fond embrace of their parents by the grim monster Death, is indeed a trial through which but few

are called to pass. Belle was so gentle and kind, so modest and retiring in her nature, that none knew her but to love and praise; so industrious and ingenious that everything about the house and yard spoke in silent language of her handiwork. She had never made a public confession of a hope in Jesus, but her parents had thought for some time that the blessed Jesus had given her "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." A few days after she was taken sick she told her father and grandmother (her mother was also very sick with the measles) that she had for more than two years been deeply sensible of her lost and ruined condition; that one day, not a great while ago, as she was sitting by her organ, mourning over her awful condition, suddenly a spirit of peace and calmness filled her soul, and she clapped her hands for joy. Her father asked her if she would go to the church when she got well. She said she thought she would, as she had often wanted to join the church, but felt to be unfit. She told them, however, that she would never get well; for, said she, "the last time I looked upon Mercer's sweet, dead face, I thought he was the most beautiful object I ever saw, and I felt so sure that I should soon be with him, that I could not grieve nor shed a tear." They asked her if she wished to get well. She said, "No, I would not turn my hand to get well. I am as ready to go now as I shall ever be." Many other precious things she said at different times during her illness, which are treasured in the hearts of her parents, and should be an abiding comfort to them.

How beautiful she looked in death, clothed in her bridal array; for had she lived she would have been married that day to Mr. Willie Walker. He waited on her tenderly and untiringly during her sickness, and when she died he begged of her parents the privilege to have her buried, to which they consented, on condition that Mercer be disinterred and put in the grave with her; to which Mr. Walker agreed. So Mercer and Belle lie side by side in the same grave, waiting the resurrection morn, when they will come forth all glorious in the image of Jesus, because of having been washed in his blood.

For twenty-one years, one month and twenty-three days Belle had made the home of her parents joyous with her presence, and then passed quietly away to her home beyond.

At Mt. Fork, on the third Sunday in June, 1888, a sermon, as a tribute to their memory, was preached by Elder J. W. Bragg, from the text, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

Written at the pressing request of their mother, by

SUE LAWLER.

BROWNSBORO, Ala.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—By request of our aged brother, Deacon John Sagur, I send you for publication a notice of the departure from this mortal state of his dear wife, **Martha Sagur**, who fell asleep in Jesus September 10th, 1888. She was born November 3d, 1798, and had therefore nearly reached the great age of ninety years. They were married January 9th, 1823. After having lived happily together in this relation for nearly sixty years, during most of which time they also enjoyed companionship with each other in the spiritual relationship, being manifestly "heirs together of the grace of life," she has passed on before him to the satisfying realities and blessedness of heaven, leaving him to stay here his remaining days alone. But he is sustained by a good hope which has been as an anchor to his soul for many years, and says that the good Lord has made him ready and willing to go to his heavenly home. They were baptized by Elder

James Bowen in the fellowship of the Southampton Old School Baptist Church, June 12th, 1834, and may truly be said to have walked together in the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless.

For some years they had lived with their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. John Krewson, where they received the kindest attention, and the ministrations of love, not only from the members of this family, but also from their son and his family, who live some distance away, and from their kindred in Christ, by all of whom they were held in dearest love and esteem. After they were unable to attend the meetings of the church, the brethren occasionally met at the house on Sunday afternoons. These meetings were very comforting to them. The last time that the dear departed sister heard preaching was in March, at the house of her sister in this village, where they were then spending a few days. The words used as a text on that occasion were these, found in Isaiah xlii. 4, "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you." After the speaking was over she said, "That is just what I have been waiting for." The Lord had blessed the word to her especial comfort. She was of a singularly quiet and retiring disposition, and much given to questioning concerning the evidences of her hope, of which she spoke very timidly. Yet she was esteemed as very spiritually minded by her brethren, and the subject of salvation was all her theme. She spoke much during the past few years of her darkness of mind, and of her great unworthiness. Once she said, in her soft, low voice, "I wonder sometimes if the Lord is going to put me to bed in the dark." But all the time, even when most tempted to question her hope, she manifested such an interest in spiritual things, and such love for them, that it was a great comfort to the spiritually minded to be with her. At one of the afternoon meetings the 1289th hymn in Beebe's Collection was sung to the tune "Pleasant Hill." It was so comforting to her that from that time it was much upon her mind, and she was wonderfully pleased to hear it read or sung. The hymn begins,

"There is a place of hallowed peace  
For those with cares oppressed."

She failed very gradually, and passed away quietly, like a child falling asleep. Our dear brother was unable to leave the house at the time of her funeral, and there were exercises of public worship, and speaking both at the house in Newtown, six miles from here, and at the meeting-house.

SILAS H. DURAND.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 7, 1888.

### CHURCH HISTORY DEBT OF \$2000.

#### CONTRIBUTIONS DURING OCTOBER.

MARYLAND—Elder F. A. Chick 5.  
NEW YORK—Mrs. A. C. Hull 1, Mrs. J. V. Winchell 1.  
NORTH CAROLINA—Elder A. J. Moore (additional) 5, Elder P. D. Gold 5, Elder J. W. Johnston 5, Lawrence Johnston 5, Wm. Hodges (additional) 5, Wm. C. Trevathan 5, I. W. Bass 5, H. L. Sherrod 5, J. H. Alsbrook (additional) 5, B. I. Alsbrook (additional) 5, S. R. Ross 2, W. L. Davis 1, C. G. Dowdy 1, C. C. Aydlett 1, Brother in Nash County 1, Elder J. N. Rogerson 1, N. S. Phelps 1, Elder G. D. Robertson 1, Elder L. J. Deberry 1, Elder W. F. Staton 1, W. J. Gardner 1, W. B. Liverman 1, W. G. Bailey 1, D. R. Daniel 1.25, D. A. Scott 1, Elder John Rowe 1, John D. Price 1, Mary F. Randall 25c, W. B. Strickland 50c, N. W. Strickland 75c, W. J. Moss 50c, Mrs. Carrie Pippen 50c.  
Total ..... \$ 77 75  
Total previously published ..... 514 35  
Grand total to Nov. 1st ..... \$592 10

### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

Amos H. McKay 2 50, T. J. Zellner 2 50,  
James P. Thomas 2 50.—Total \$7 50.

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"    "    Academic Department.....	20 00
"    "    Commercial Department.....	20 00
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"    "    Drawing.....	10 00
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Use of Piano or Organ.....	5 00
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Board with Principal, including Lights, Fuel and Washing.....	50 00

The Entire Average Expenses, including Books, are about Seventy Dollars per Session of Twenty Weeks. This amount should be paid half in advance, and half at the middle of the Session.

#### CALENDAR.

Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888.  
Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.  
Spring Session begins Monday, January 21st, 1889.  
Spring Session ends Friday, June 7th, 1889.  
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"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1888. NO. 23.

## POETRY.

### THOU KNOWEST ALL.

SINKING, often faint and weary,  
'Neath the burden of the day,  
Prostrate, Lord, I fall before thee,  
And in weakness try to pray;  
Try to tell thee all the sorrows  
That my fainting soul surround;  
Try to put in words the trials  
Which encompass me around.  
But what words can tell the story  
Of a soul so sick of sin,  
Burdened down with earthly conflicts,  
And corruptions felt within?  
Then the thought comes, with it bringing  
Comfort to my troubled heart,  
That thou knowest all, my Savior,  
All my tongue fails to impart.  
Peace and rest this knowledge brings me,  
That whatever may befall,  
Be it joy, or grief and trouble,  
Thou, my Savior, knowest all!  
Knowing all the pain and heart-ache,  
Who can better suit the cure?  
And if sorrow be my portion,  
Thou wilt strengthen to endure.

OCTOBER 24, 1888.

### MY VESPER SONG.

~~Faded with weariness and pain,~~  
Scarcely strong enough to pray,  
In this twilight hour I sit,  
Sit and sing my doubt away.  
O'er my broken purposes,  
Ere the coming shadows roll,  
Let me build a bridge of song,  
"Jesus, lover of my soul."  
"Let me to thy bosom fly"—  
How the words my thoughts repeat!  
To thy bosom, Lord, I come,  
Though unfit to kiss thy feet.  
Once I gathered sheaves for thee,  
Dreaming I could hold them fast;  
Now I can but idly sing,  
"O receive my soul at last!"  
I am weary of my fears,  
Like a child when night comes on,  
In the shadow, Lord, I sing,  
"Leave, O leave me not alone!"  
Through the tears I still must shed,  
Through the evil yet to be,  
Though I falter while I sing,  
"Still support and comfort me."  
"All my trust on thee is stayed"—  
Does the rhythm of the song,  
Softly falling on my heart,  
Make its pulses firm and strong?  
Or is this thy perfect peace,  
Now descending while I sing,  
That my soul may sleep to-night  
"Neath the shadow of thy wing?"  
"Thou of life the fountain art"—  
If I slumber on thy breast,  
If I sing myself to sleep,  
Sleep and death alike are rest!  
Through the shadows overpast,  
Through the shadows yet to be,  
Let the ladder of my song  
"Rise to all eternity."  
Note by note its silver bars  
May my soul in love ascend,  
Till I reach the highest round  
In thy kingdom without end.  
Not impatiently I sing,  
Though I lift my hands and cry,  
"Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly!"

## CORRESPONDENCE.

"My meditation of him shall be sweet."  
—Psalm civ. 34.

DEAR BRETHREN:—Of late these words have been lingering in my mind with a great sense of rest and comfort, and through them I have been led to meditate much upon that which God has revealed of himself in his word; and this morning I feel like writing down some of my thoughts for the SIGNS.

The Psalm itself is full of pleasant things upon which the sweet singer of Israel was meditating. In the first ten verses he tells of the creative power of God, by which all things came into existence. Then from the tenth to the thirtieth verses he tells of his providence toward all his creatures, by which they are preserved, from the least to the greatest. In verse thirty-one he declares the permanence of his work; and then, to the end, he speaks of various things connected with what had gone before, and among them of the impressions produced in himself by his meditations upon the work and ways of God. I too have found great strength in reading the calm, confident and sublime language of this Psalm. During this past year the doctrine of God's providence over all his creatures has been forced upon my thoughts, and it has been my comfort, my hope and my strength to believe that he cares for every living thing. "How manifold are thy works, O Lord! and in wisdom hast thou made them all." The doctrine of this Psalm is in exact accord with such language as this, "The hairs of your head are all numbered." "Not a sparrow can fall to the ground without your heavenly Father." "If God so clothe the grass of the field, shall he not also clothe you, O ye of little faith?" I must confess that I am so little affected by modern philosophy, which would make much of second causes and little of God, that I believe these Scriptures just as they read. Creative and preserving power is displayed in the mote which we see floating in the sun-beam, as much as in the creation and preservation of a world. What a glorious thought it is, that the gnat which dances to and fro in the evening breeze has been created by him, and assigned its time of life and its place in the world, as much as the archangel which stands at his right hand. How, otherwise, could man, of whom it is said that all nations are as a drop in the bucket or as the small dust in the balance, have any assur-

ance that he should be remembered and cared for? Because God cares for the least things, therefore he that feels to be less than nothing, and vanity, can feel at the same time safe.

Now the psalmist, in view of all these things, says, "My meditation of him shall be sweet." Man will meditate upon that which he knows and loves. The psalmist knew and loved the Lord, and therefore his meditations were of him. In every place but one in the Bible, where meditation is spoken of, it presents divine things as the subject of meditation. In that one place (Luke xxi. 14) disciples are forbidden, when arraigned before rulers, to meditate beforehand what they shall say. In Genesis xxiv. 63 it is said, "Isaac went out to meditate," or, as the margin reads, to pray. He withdrew to himself. Joshua commanded the people to meditate in the law, and to have it in their mouths constantly.—Joshua i. 8. In Psalm i. 2 the righteous man is said to meditate in the law of the Lord day and night. Paul exhorts Timothy to meditate on these things, and to give himself to meditation.—1 Tim. iv. 15. In the lips of the psalmist meditation is a frequent word. He knew the Lord and loved his name, and so was often found in meditation upon him.

This is the language of a child of God. The unregenerate man has no such meditations. If he thinks of God, it is as of something that he wants to banish from his thoughts. Whatever meditation he may have of God is not sweet. His delight is in his wealth, his friends, his learning, his carnal pleasures and mirth; perhaps it may be in wickedness, filth, and all indecency of speech and action and thought. But here is a man who says, "My meditation of him shall be sweet." Surely he must have been born again, and have come to know God and to love God. If there be anything we do not know, we cannot meditate upon it. If there be anything we do know, and yet do not love, we desire not to meditate upon it. If there be anything we hate, we shall try to banish it from our thoughts. But what we know and love we shall delight to think upon; and we shall find sweetness in thinking of all that we can recall concerning the loved one. What bereaved husband or wife does not desire to often recall the form of the loved one gone before? How does the memory fondly linger upon each word and loving action and gentle

caress; and this though such memories are mingled with sadness, and perhaps with tears. But when we meditate upon God there is no grief save the grief and shame of being so much unlike him. He is not dead, but lives, and we live by him and in him.

Meditating upon him is all sweet. Whatever we see in our God is most delightful to the believing heart. If he looks within, all is dark and vain and wild. He can never say, "My meditation of myself shall be sweet." The worldly finds delight in himself. He fancies that none are so fair as he. The worldly religionist thinks with complacency of his goodness, his religion, his vows, performances and penances. He even thanks God that he is better than his fellow. But to him who sees, there is no joy in any of these things. He feels ashamed of himself, and hides his face whenever he thinks of his very best works. The remembrance of them fills him with bitterness and shame. But when he meditates upon God there is all fullness of goodness, righteousness and truth to be seen, and everything is fitted to add to his joy. David had seen the Lord, and he knew whereof he affirmed. Who that has ever known the Lord but knows the sweetness of such meditation? What joy must the early disciples have felt often in thinking over all that the Savior did and said when he was yet with them in the flesh! How it must have lightened many a prison, smoothed many a rough pathway, shortened many a journey, and cheered many an hour when all was gloom, to think over the many words which he spoke, and the many deeds of love and power which he had performed, while yet with them, and of the assurances for the future which he held out for them! They could never have become weary of such reflections; and is it not so still? Are not our sweetest hours spent in meditation upon him? Child of God, do you not desire that both mind and heart shall be filled with his image? Do you not feel that every day in which he is not in your thoughts is a lost day? What a great sweetness is wanting when he is not in all our thoughts!

The fact that our meditations of him are so often interrupted does not change the truth of the text. On the contrary, it only helps to set this truth in a clearer light. Do we find it a great grief that our thoughts so often go astray, that when we pray, or hear, or read, they will not be

fastened upon these things, but wander, like the fool's eye, refusing to rest upon or grasp anything? Is it a sorrow and shame to us that the world, its friendships, riches and ambitions, usurp so large a portion of our time? Do we deplore that self and the world at times seem to be all in all to us, and we hardly can spend a moment in meditation upon his holy name? By these things we learn to prize the hours when he comes to us and fills our hearts with his presence, and communes with us, and when we are not afraid, and do not seek to hide ourselves, nor flee from his presence. By these interruptions we learn more fully the truth that "In his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore."

It is sure that if our meditations of him are sweet, we cannot at the same time be harboring in our breasts anger, malice, pride, vainglory, or idle boasting over others. We cannot be seeking to injure others, or even be careless as to their happiness or interests. If we love God we shall also love our neighbor; and if the love of one is wanting, so will be the love of the other. If we love not God, there is no sweetness in meditating upon him. That man whose heart is fixed on God will also rejoice in Zion and in its inhabitants. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments." The one is not separated from the other. "If a man see his brother have need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, how dwelleth [not the love of his brother—no, not that, but] the love of God in him?" If our meditations of God then are sweet, there will also be great sweetness and gentleness in our hearts toward others. Bitterness, anger, wrath and evil speaking prevent all sweetness in communion with God. I speak what I do know, and testify what I have seen. O how these things hinder our meditations! What abhorrence and loathing of self do they cause! Part of the sweetness of meditation upon God is that the evil passions for the time are stilled. There must no beast of the forest creep forth from his lair when we meditate upon God. If our meditations be sweet, he of whom we meditate must be abiding in our hearts; and when he comes all the earth will keep silence before him. There shall not then dare to creep forth a single deadly beast nor venomous serpent. They flee from the light; and when the Lord cometh it is light. He spreads then a table before us in the presence of our enemies, and in sweet meditation we lie down by still waters and feed in green pastures. O that our hearts might always sing, as did David's, "My meditation of him shall be sweet!"

We may become weary of thinking upon any earthly object, however

near and dear and delightful it be. We may finally exhaust that subject, so that any further thought upon it may be stale; but our meditations upon God can never grow distasteful, or seem old or unprofitable. All fullness dwells in him; and we need all that fullness. There is nothing in him that we can do without. Whatever may be the word, work or attribute of his that commands our thoughts, it is something in which we are concerned, and something that specially meets our need. This is one of the sweetnesses of such meditation that it is the very thing I need, and which I cannot do without. The grace, mercy and peace of God have no meaning for us except we have had need of them. Food is not sweet except I am hungry. A full soul loathes a honey-comb. The best things are unsavory unless sweetened by hunger. He who meditates upon God with sweetness must have need of him, and feel that need. Another reason why meditation of God is sweet is that there is such endless variety in him. In his works it is so. No one ever saw two faces that were precisely alike. There is infinite variety in all the works of God, even as there is an infinite variety of tastes among men. It is so in the spiritual world. At most we are but gleaners in the vast fields of gospel truth. No man has yet measured the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Paul heard unspeakable things, which it was impossible for him to tell, and yet afterward he said, "We see in part, and prophesy in part." Our experience is never quite repeated the second time. Israel, though they met many foes, never saw the Egyptians again. Each man has his own peculiar trials and joys, conflicts and deliverances. No two are precisely alike; yet they hope in the same mercy, and are all led by the same Spirit. No child of God ever grew weary of hearing narratives of christian travel, because while each shows the work of the same Spirit, there is yet endless variety and newness. So renewed meditation of God brings us continually into new fields, bright with his glory and filled with his presence.

What is there in God that makes meditation concerning him sweet? Let us ask rather, What is there that to the humble believer is not sweet? Have the weak, the poor, the lowly, the sinful, the helpless, any fault to find when they think of his wisdom, power, goodness, truth, love, unchangeableness, predestination, election and holiness? Do not these things, on the other hand, charm their ears and fill their hearts with gladness? In these wonderful truths they rejoice, and by them they live. Remove these things from their view, and all to them is night and gloom. Ask this humble believer where his hope is, and what is the ground of his joy, and he will point out these very things as the foundation of all. In the hours when darkness assails

him, and his sinful weakness and conformity to the world accuse him, and he feels unable to break the chain which so hinders his race, he must know that his God is a God of power, love and faithfulness, and unchangeable, else he will sink in despair. Believers love to think of their God, and his holy character and attributes, for he is all and in all to them. As I think of that wisdom which embraces all things, which is surprised at nothing, which never is mistaken nor uncertain, which embraces and declares the end from the beginning, which sees and always has seen every step and every turn in the lives of all his creatures, which knows the glorious end of all the sorrows and trials which his beloved children endure, and sees just how all is working together for good to them, I cannot help thinking also how happy he must be in his omniscience. And how happy we are in his omniscience!

How true it is that his omnipotence is our strength, his wisdom is for our guidance, his righteousness is our righteousness, his holiness is the pledge of our everlasting joy, his love is the ground of our election, and nothing ever shall be able to separate us from it. These things all are sweet to meditate upon. Of one thing I feel better prepared to speak now than I did a year ago. I know what power and sweetness there is for the sorrowful in the truth that our God has predestinated all things whatsoever come to pass. Who would have anything left to chance? Who would want that anything should be uncertain in the mind of God? Yet whatever could be said not to be predestinated of God, must be uncertain to him. But O! how sweet it is to meditate that all is predestinated—that nothing is uncertain. He performs the very thing that he has appointed for each one of his creatures. He appoints beforehand, and then his own hand fulfills his decree.

In conclusion I will say that this meditation of him has been sweet to me. May it be so to others.

As ever, your brother in hope,

F. A. CHICK.

REISTERSTOWN, Md., Nov. 15, 1888.

GHEAT, Ky., Nov. 10, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Some weeks since I received a letter from sister Abigail D. Kendall, who lives in the state of New York. At the time it came to hand my mail was unusually large, and I got it mislaid, and now do not know her address, or I would answer it by private letter, and not attempt to encumber the columns of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES with my feeble thoughts upon the truly interesting subject to which she invites my attention, and upon which she asks my views. That subject will be found in Solomon's Song viii. 8, 9, and reads as follows, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the

day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver; and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar."

Evidently the wise king of Israel, controlled by the power of the Spirit, used natural relationships to illustrate great spiritual truths. In this text the relationship that exists between sisters is presented, to make known the connection of the church in the legal and the gospel dispensations. The one who speaks says, "I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favor." She surely represents the church in the legal dispensation. God's dear people through all that dark and shadowy dispensation found favor in his eyes. They were spiritually fed by the types and shadows of the law, and by the great and wonderful teachings of the prophets. They all pointed away to the coming of our Lord, and to the great and wonderful work which he would accomplish in that body which was given him. Of this glorious Being Isaiah said, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isa. ix. 6. Mark you, he uses the pronoun *us*, in the plural number. Then that Son was a gift to the church, both in the legal and gospel dispensations. Hence the prophet uses the present tense, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." He was as much a gift to the church in the legal as he was to the church in the gospel dispensation. All know that children draw their sustenance from the breasts. God's dear children were fed in the legal as well as in the gospel dispensation. The faith of the saints in the legal dispensation was sustained by the offerings made in the temple service, and the things prefigured by the law, as well as what the prophets foretold when they declared the coming of their Lord to his temple. The Lord by the prophet Malachi says, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." The temple here mentioned was not the temple at Jerusalem, but was the church; and to that church he did come, to redeem it from all iniquity. In that messenger of the covenant of redemption the church in the legal dispensation delighted, and all the dear saints were fed by things of that dispensation. The apostle, when addressing the church in the gospel dispensation, to which that great Messenger had come, says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" He dwells in a temple not made with hands; for "It is not by might, nor

by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." But the church under the legal dispensation, which is represented by the elder sister, says, "I am a wall, and my breasts like towers." O yes, that wall was built in infinite wisdom, and cemented by God's unalterable decrees and his everlasting love. Upon it the ancient saints stood, and were nourished by the breasts that were like towers. O what wondrous things were taught by that law which was given on that smoke-capped mount, which shook to its very granite base when Moses received it at the hands of the great I Am; and what glorious things were taught to the spiritually minded Israelite by the law of offerings. From these he day by day drew his spiritual food. He day by day saw the offerings in the temple service, saw the shedding of blood, which prefigured that great offering and the shedding of blood of the Lamb of God, by which he perfected forever them that are sanctified. Beholding through those types the great offering for sin that would be made at the end of that dispensation, he was spiritually fed. But she speaks again, and says, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts." How very small must that little sister then have appeared to the spiritually minded Israelite. Ages and centuries must intervene before that little sister would be spoken for. Wonderful changes must occur in the political world before the Cæsars would be enthroned in the empire of Rome, of which Daniel prophesied, saying, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." That prophet had a prophetic view of the day when that little sister would be spoken for; but while the elder sister was speaking of her, she (the little sister) was silent. The time had not come for her to speak. That time would not come till that period had dawned upon the world of which the Lord by the prophet speaks, saying, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." Soon after that messenger had appeared she began to speak, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Then her glorious Lord appeared, saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Then her tongue was fully loosed, and she went forth into all lands and climes, proclaiming that gospel of the grace of God, and all her children were fed and comforted. She then had breasts, for she had the whole gospel of God our Savior. Go feed my sheep and lambs, was the command of her Lord. Every true minister of the gospel fills a place in her train, of which Isaiah speaks, saying, "His train filled the temple." She and her Lord being inseparably united, the prophet says of her, "In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteous-

ness." Surely she no longer can be called a little sister. The angel said to John, "Come hither; I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." And John said, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." John was only taken to that great and high mountain. He could not be taken upon it, for it was the mountain of God's eternal and unchangeable love for that little sister; that love which caused Jesus to lay aside the glory that he had with the Father before the world was; that love which caused him to endure the sorrows of Gethsemane and the tortures of Calvary, that he might adorn her in a robe of spotless righteousness, and secure to her his name, "The Lord our righteousness."

But the elder sister says, "If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver." A palace is the place of residence of royal families. How wonderfully appropriate! That little sister is now the bride of a great King. She is the bride, the Lamb's wife; and how appropriate it is for her to have the most costly palace built for her and around her. "A palace of silver." Surely none more costly was ever built. When silver is highly burnished it excels all other metals in reflecting the light of the sun. Our Lord said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." But their light was reflected. He shines in them, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." How wonderful must be the light reflected by a palace of silver in the full glare of a midday sun! but how infinitely greater must be the light of that great city set on a hill, every part of which is burnished by that skilled workman who is infinite in power and wisdom, who doeth all things well, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will! Let us remember that when that little sister came forth, the great Sun of righteousness had arisen with healing in his wings. He is the great luminary of the gospel heavens. When he arose, all the clouds, mists and darkness of the legal dispensation were dispelled. Nothing could intervene between him and that palace of silver. Hence that church has been the light of the world since it was set up in the days of those kings, and will continue to be till the great angel shall stand with one foot on the sea and the other on the land and swear that time shall be no longer.

But the elder sister further says, "If she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar." It is said that the cedars of Palestine furnished the most durable timber known to the world. Then how appropriate the figure adopted by the sacred penman. "If she be a door;" "If she be a wall." These two simple

sentences, although in their form may be construed to convey a doubt, yet the true construction is that they convey an affirmative idea, which is that the little sister, when the time had come for her to be spoken for (that is, the ushering in of the gospel dispensation), appeared both as a wall and as a door. Our Lord said, "I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." The church is not an independent organization, separate from its Head, but it is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ; and we cannot use the word church properly without presenting the idea of the foundation on which she stands, which is Christ. He says, "On this rock I will build my church." When he said, "I am the door," he presented his unity and oneness with the church. The entrance into this great house is by and through the door. Our Lord said, "I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." None can enter into the church but by the power of regenerating grace, which is the gift of God. None have a right to a seat in that church but those who are born again. They must be living children, or they cannot enjoy the rich feasts provided for them. Yet it is a mournful truth that many who are numbered among the children of God give evidence that they are not of the household of faith. They give that evidence by seeking to occupy high seats in the councils of the saints, and by claiming to be *par excellence* in wisdom and devotion. It is to be feared that they have never understood this language of the prophet, "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Here the little sister, with her dwelling place, and the characteristics of all her household, are brought to view by the prophet. The gospel heaven is her home, her dwelling place, and all her children day by day realize that they are poor, and that they have nothing spiritually of which to boast. When looking to themselves they are made to say, with one anciently, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Ah, how sweet and precious to them are these last words of the prophet, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" I have beheld him by an eye of faith; I have beheld some of the beauties and glories of his wondrous character. While thus beholding his all-exalted character as King of kings and Lord of lords, they are made to realize their poverty, and to suffer the sorrows of a

contrite spirit; but these are some of the evidences that are given to them, to show that they truly belong to the household of that little sister. They are fed by the glorious truth of the gospel. They rejoice amidst sorrows, disappointments and bereavements, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." When sinking with age and the cares and afflictions of life, they are made to rejoice, knowing that their Lord hath said to them, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

Sister Kendall said in her letter that she was eighty-four years old. Ah, my dear sister, soon the battle of life will be over with you, and with the feeble writer of these rambling thoughts. You are my senior by eight years, but the day of my departure may be nearer at hand than yours; but if we are prepared to say, with patient Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come," all will be well with us.

But perhaps sister Kendall will ask, How was the little sister inclosed with boards of cedar? All know that the shutter for a door is to protect the inmates of the house from cold and damp, and the ingress of obtruders. So the household of the little sister is inclosed with all the precious and unfailing promises of God. The cold and wicked persecutions of a corrupt world can never change or remove one of those promises. The chilling winds of adversity can never shake or weaken the eternal and immutable love of God for all the household of that little sister. All his promises are as immutable as his holy character. He says, "I am the Lord, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." They can never be consumed when inclosed by the promises of that God who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? To his wondrous name be all the glory.

If this is published, I offer it to sister Kendall, feeble as it is, as a token of my christian love for her and all the household of faith. Inclosed I forward by postal note my subscription for the SIGNS for 1889, which, if I should live to read that volume, will be fifty-three years that I have been a reader of that paper; and I subscribe myself affectionately yours,

H. COX.

NEW HOLLAND, Ohio, Oct., 1888.

MY DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:— It has been a long while since I attempted in my feeble, stammering way to address you. During the summer season I am so oppressed for breath, and become so feeble at times, both in mind and body, that I am incapacitated even to carry on a private correspondence; but when the

cool autumn weather comes, with its refreshing, invigorating breezes, my sense of suffocation is greatly lessened. I become somewhat stronger, and then my thoughts begin to go out to the dear, loved ones in the Lord, and I cannot lay aside or suppress the longing desire to communicate with them through the medium of our dear family paper, the SIGNS.

This is the Lord's day, and a most beautiful day in nature. The bright golden sunlight fills my room with a flood of soft, mellow light, and gladdens the great broad earth without with its light and warmth. Every place, everywhere can be seen evidences of God's wonderful wisdom, his goodness and mercy to poor, sinful, fallen man. Everywhere, in our cities, towns and villages, may be seen drunkenness and vice, men and women dishonoring God and disobeying his holy laws and those of our land; while on the other hand, the long-suffering and tender mercy of our covenant-keeping God are displayed in the fullness of the granaries, the abundance of corn, the still tender, green grass, and the fruit trees laden with ripened fruit. Is not the Lord indeed good? His goodness and mercy extend to all. He causes the rain to fall upon the unjust as well as upon the just. But to his own peculiar and chosen people, who he says are the salt of the earth, are not his infinite and tender mercies far beyond what tongue can tell? On this delightful day no doubt many of my readers are assembled with the Lord's dear people to worship him in his earthly courts, to listen to the watchmen upon Zion's walls proclaim the news of great tidings to the poor, to hear the sweet old story told so sweetly by one whose beautiful feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel, the story of Jesus and his love. Dear reader, do you realize what a blessed privilege this is? If you do not, you would should you ever be shut in from the dear sights and sounds of the blessed gospel. But God is good, O so good to me, a poor, weak, vile sinner; for although I am deprived of going up to the house of the Lord, of hearing the dear under-shepherd's voice, of seeing the loved and familiar faces of my kindred in Christ, yet the blessed Comforter comes to me in my sick room, the soothing influence of his dear presence is felt in my heart, the thick clouds of darkness and unbelief are removed, the stony heart becomes one of flesh, and the still, small voice speaks to me in accents sweet. It tells me that Jesus is the same, and that God is love. It gives me beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and fills my heart with such gladness and joy, such rapturous love, as my poor, stammering tongue can never tell. When this sweet love, this dear presence, is felt in the heart, how dearly do we love his people. With what longing, loving desire do the thoughts and affections go out to our spiritual kindred throughout our own beloved land, and to those who love

our dear Redeemer in foreign lands, the lands beyond the sea. I recently read two lovely letters, which contained cheering and refreshing messages for unworthy me, written by a brother and sister, between myself and whom the waters of the Atlantic Ocean roll. How it animated and cheered my heart to read the same sweet story, told most beautifully and sweetly by that dear brother and sister in that distant foreign land, that is so dear to the christian heart in our beloved America. It was at a late hour of one of my sleepless nights that I first read those dear letters, with five other golden gems, laden with the sweet incense, the rich treasures of the dear Master's love. For a long while previous to that time I had had great darkness of mind, and much barrenness and sorrow of soul. A chain of adverse circumstances hedged me about on every side. Martha-like, I would be anxious and troubled about many things. Knowing so well how often I had been almost miraculously delivered from just such troublous circumstances, I loathed myself because I could not still cast my burden on the gracious Burden-bearer, and sweetly trust and rest in his promises. The reading of those spiritual letters, which so honored and glorified the name of Jesus, and told so sweetly of his mercy and love, was to me as the loaves and fishes from which Jesus fed so many. My soul was fed from his rich treasury, my cup of joy was filled to overflowing, and a sweet, overwhelming sense of his love, his mercy and tender care came over me, so that I could not have slept for very joy, had my physical condition been such as would have allowed it. The silent hours of the night, which so often drag wearily along, were precious moments, in which, alone with Jesus, with blessed communion with him, my soul feasted on the joys of his salvation, and drank the honeyed sweetness that flows from the fountain of his eternal love. In such moments the soul longs to burst the bonds that hold it here and fly to the realms of the blessed, where with no intervening veil we can behold the Father's face, and be forever freed from the sins and corruptions of our carnal nature, and be made forever perfect in the likeness and image of our beloved Redeemer. We feel that we are walking softly before him in love, we are lying down in the cool, green pastures, we are resting beside the still waters; but we know that if still in the flesh it will not be long until instead of the smooth, green pastures, our wayward feet will be in a thorny road, and instead of resting beside the still waters we will be rowing upon a storm-tossed Galilean sea, ready to cry, as did Peter, "Lord, save, or we perish!" O what poor, helpless creatures we are, stiff-necked, rebellious, ready to murmur, and prone to turn again to the flesh-pots of Egypt! In and of ourselves we can be sure of nothing; but the

promise of God is sure, and he knows them that are his, and none can pluck them out of his hand. Through deep waters of physical and mental pain, through awful darkness and doubt and unbelief, I am sometimes led into the light and brightness of the dear Savior's presence. Salvation even to me, a vile sinner, seems so near, so true, Jesus seems so near, so sweetly speaks peace to my troubled soul, that life's billows give place to an unruffled sea; and such ascriptions of praise fill my soul that I feel I must tell those about me how good is the Lord, how wonderful his kindness to me in all my afflictions. But when I look backward, and see how I sometimes doubt the blessed Savior, how often I say to myself, "The Lord has forgotten to be gracious; he remembers me no more," I am so ashamed and humbled to the dust that I feel it would be incongruous and hypocritical for me to take his dear and sacred name upon my lips. Yet it is needful even in our moments of rejoicing that we have the thorn in the flesh, so that no flesh can glory in his sight, and that we may see it is through no goodness of ours that we are made to enjoy these foretastes of heavenly joys. In this wonderful journey I have learned that our low feelings are just before our upliftings, that the darkest hour is just at the coming of morning's dawn, and that our times are indeed within his hand.

There was something peculiarly sweet to me in the obituary of dear Little Dot Wood, so beautifully written by Elder Taylor Moore. It too came to me as a song in the night, for it was past the hour of midnight when I first noticed it in the SIGNS. After reading it I almost thought I felt his spirit near, communing with my spirit; at any rate, an indescribable feeling of nearness to him and the blessed Savior came over me, and during the remainder of the night I was made, I think, to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. I desire to send warmest love in this communication to the dear saints everywhere who during the past year, and indeed ever since my affliction, have sent me cheering messages of love, who have borne with my imperfections, and have aided me in many ways, both temporally and spiritually, so that, though sorely tried and afflicted, countless blessings have been showered upon me; and notwithstanding the severity of my pain, I have often been made to say, "It is good for me to be afflicted." Will you not, dear ones, still remember me in your prayers? Will you not still also send me your dear epistles of love? You who have written me cannot know what a bright gleam of sunshine irradiated my darkened sick room by the coming of your white-winged missives, nor with what eagerness and delight I look forward to the incoming mail trains. May choicest blessings fall upon you all, and especially our faithful editors. May the dear Lord strengthen and

uphold them, and give them the aid and support of all lovers of truth.

In deep affliction, yours in hope,  
MARY PARKER.

CRITTENDEN COUNTY, Ky.

EDITORS SIGNS OF THE TIMES—  
DEAR BRETHREN:—A former member of our church, a licensed preacher, joined the Missionary Baptists, and I requested him to write his reasons for leaving the Old Baptists and joining the Missionaries. He wrote his reasons, and requested me to reply to him, and also give my reasons for being an Old Baptist, and have both published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I reckon he thought his article unanswerable, and that it would shake the foundation of the Old Baptists. But when we come to examine it, we find a great deal said about sinners, and that Christ and his apostles were very much interested in their eternal salvation, and devoted much time in trying to get them converted. I forward you his letter and my reply.

Yours in hope of eternal life.

J. B. HARDY.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY, Ky.

ELDER J. B. HARDY—DEAR BROTHER:—With the very best of feelings, I seat myself for the purpose of complying with your earnest request. You asked me to write out my reasons for leaving the Old Baptists, and for being a Missionary Baptist. The request stunned me at the time, as I am not much on the write. However, I will try, God being my helper; for if I should fail to comply, it would give room for ill-inferences, namely, that I have no reasons, or that I am ashamed of them, or afraid to give them. I will proceed in as earnest a manner as I can.

In the first place, I will say that the Old Baptists, somewhere between this time and the days of Christ and the apostles, departed from the main and principal part of the gospel of Christ; for they do not address the unconverted sinner. They say that he is not a subject of gospel address. Now, if Christ and the apostles did make the unconverted sinner a subject of gospel address, have you not departed from the main and principal part of the gospel? For the gospel is full of calls and invitations to the unconverted sinner; for Christ says to sinners (Luke xiii. 24), "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Who preaches to sinners in that way now, the Old Baptists or the Missionary Baptists? The Missionary Baptists do. Who is it that raise their voices in warning sinners of their danger, as the Savior did, in the twenty-fifth verse of the same chapter? Listen to his warning, "When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without," and beg for admittance, and it shall be denied. The Missionaries do warn. They get up in their revival meetings, and warn sinners

in like manner, and tell them what a dreadful time it will be for them to stand without and beg for admittance; and tell them that their time of standing without will have a beginning, but no ending; and tell them earnestly to strive to enter in at the strait gate. It is then the Old Baptists say that they are trying to get up an excitement and scare them into it. Listen at the Savior, telling them of their future situation. Twenty-eighth verse, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all of the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Now, when the Missionaries tell sinners what a horrible time it will be to see the blood-bought throng in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out; and tell them about the tormented rich man in hell, raising his eyes, and looking into the heaven of eternal felicity, and there beholding the happy subjects of glory, and desiring them to dip the tip of their finger in water, and cool their tongue; it is then that you brand them as Arminians and workmongers. I ask if such preaching is modern or ancient preaching. It is just as ancient as any of the rest of Christ's preaching. And who does such preaching now? The Missionary Baptists do; and the Old Baptists do omit such preaching. I ask if Christ did not know who would stand without and seek admittance. He did; but that did not hinder him from preaching to them to strive to enter into the strait gate. Christ did know, but we do not know; therefore it is our duty to cry like the old apostle did, to beware lest these things come on you. The good old apostle of Jesus Christ, in his writings, sets forth God's foreordination, predestination and foreknowledge; but that did not hinder him from manifesting an interest for the eternal welfare of the unconverted in general; for we hear him, in the nineteenth chapter, fourteenth verse, of Acts, raising his voice in warning to the unconverted Jews, in order to their eternal welfare. Hear him in his great anxiety crying out, "Beware." We all know that little word is full of warning itself, without anything else. In the two preceding verses he says, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Listen to the next verse: "And by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Who is it that is justified? "All that believe." It is a matter of course. Well, what is the negative of that? All that do not believe are not justified. It is a matter of course. To strengthen my argument, I will cite you to the third chapter of John, eighteenth verse. "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is already condemned." And the reason is, because they have not believed on the only begotten Son of God. We will step

over to Paul again. He says that by Christ all that believe are justified. Now he manifests his anxiety for these unconverted Jews to believe and be justified also by the blood of Christ.

We will now finish the fortieth verse of the thirteenth chapter of Acts. "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which was spoken in the prophets." Now it does seem to me that the old apostle was anxious in behalf of these unconverted Jews. It seems that he was fearful lest that which was spoken of in the prophets should come on them. For this cause he cried out, "Beware." I have heard the Old Baptists say that they had no fears of the devil getting any but his angels. Now, has there been a departure from that much of the gospel? Some of those very characters that Paul manifested such an anxiety for may to-day be in the region of the damned. We have reason to believe such is the case; for in the forty-sixth verse of the same chapter, Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Read the first chapter of Romans; it will strengthen what I have said; that is, that some of the subjects that the apostles were anxious about may probably be lost.

Now we will turn over to the twenty-sixth chapter, and begin at the nineteenth verse, and you will be bound to see that the Old Baptists do not manifest half the anxiety for sinners that Paul did. God has shown him what he aimed to accomplish by and through his preaching; that is, through Paul he would open their eyes, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. What for? "That they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me;" that is, in Paul. Verse nineteen, "Whereupon, O king, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." Do you ever hear an Old Baptist preach in that way? I never did. But the Missionary Baptists do preach that way; and, thanks be to God's holy name, I speak that I do know, and testify that which I have seen. He blesses such preaching to the conversion of many dying souls. For these causes they went about to kill Paul; not because he was preaching some hard foreordination or predestination doctrine, but because he preached that they should repent and turn to God. Look how anxious Paul was in behalf of Festus and Agrippa, and all there were present. "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?" Listen how positive he

speaks to him. "I know that thou believest." And under Paul's strong arguments the king was shaken to the very bottom, and exclaimed, "Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a christian." Listen how anxious the old apostle is. It seems that I can see the old prisoner as he raises his hand, with the heavy chains to his hand, and exclaims, "I would to God that not only thou, but all that this day hear me, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Now I ask if this is not old enough Baptist doctrine. And what Baptists preach it? If Missionary Baptists do not, I do not know where to find any that do.

I am just giving you a few hints, to let you see wherein you as a people are off the track. We will speak a little more of what the Savior says to unconverted sinners. The sixth chapter of John is resorted to by the Old Baptists as often as any other in the New Testament. Jesus, in the thirty-seventh verse of this chapter, says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." I have heard the Old Baptists be very particular in their preaching to tell what gave rise to certain expressions that are in the Bible; but here is a quotation that I have yet to hear one tell what gave rise to its being spoken. Commence back in the twenty-sixth verse, and you will see what gave rise to its being spoken. There was a class of people following the Savior, not because of the miracles, but because they did eat of the loaves and fishes, and were filled. Jesus answered them and said, "Labor not for that meat which perisheth, but labor for that meat which endureth to eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed." I ask, What meat was that which Christ told those unbelievers to labor for, if it was not the religion of Jesus Christ? Who is it that preaches to men to seek an interest in the atoning blood of Christ? Who is it that tells sinners to labor to give these things a serious reflection, and not to put these thoughts from them, as did the rebellious Jews? The Missionary Baptists do; and I do know such preaching is gospel preaching, if there is any right. On the back of that language those people wanted to know what that work was, that they might do the works of God. Jesus lets them know what he engaged in the work of God. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." He not only preached unto them to believe on him to the saving of the soul, here at this place, but he often preached unto them to believe on him, and that with the assurance that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. In John xii. 36, the Savior limits the sinner's time by

saying, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light." Now, if the Missionary Baptists limit the sinner's time, and tell him to-day is his, and to-morrow is God's, and urge him to consider the matter over to-day, and make no delay, for to-morrow he may be trying the realities of an awful eternity, such preaching as that is called Arminianism by the Old Baptists. If that is Arminianism, the great Head of the church set the example. Listen. "While ye have light." What does he mean by saying, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light?" I understand that he is teaching them the uncertainty of life, and the certainty of death and a coming judgment. You may say that those people could not believe, because the prophet had prophesied against them. Well, if they could not, Christ knew it; and if he in his humanity manifested an anxiety for them to believe, I ask if it is not our duty to do the same, when we do not know. I feel that it is. In the fifth chapter of John, after that Jesus had spoken a good deal to them, he tells them, "These things I say unto you, that ye might be saved." Listen at the incarnate Son of God. "These things I say unto you, that ye might be saved." You may say, That is a time salvation. It is strange to think that he had so much interest for their time salvation, when he had none for their eternal salvation, when their time salvation would be of such short duration, and their eternal salvation would last through all eternity. I believe that it is eternal salvation; for he says in the fortieth verse, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." What sort of life is it that Christ upbraids them for not coming unto him that they might have, if it is not eternal life? The Old Baptists upbraid the Missionaries for preaching to the masses of the people to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that in believing they might have life through his name. Now you ought not to blame the Missionaries for preaching that way, when they have the very Christ of God to set the example before them. What do you reckon those people gathered from Christ's own language? Don't you reckon that they gathered that they would have been willing that they should have come unto him, and have life through his name, and be saved by his grace? I believe that they did. And why did they believe that, if it was not what he preached unto them, to make them think so? And if he did not mean what he said, what did he say it for? I do love this revival spirit, for I believe it is the Spirit of Christ. "O," says one, "I have no objection to your protracted meetings, if your converts would all prove to be good." If the fishers caught nothing but good fish, it would not resemble the net that Christ likens the kingdom of

heaven to; for the gospel net, if it is the net that Christ likens the kingdom of heaven to, is to catch both good and bad. And because the net is of the nature to catch both good and bad, we should not say that we will not fish at all, for fear that we catch some bad ones; for that is not right. Neither is it right for us to say, because the false teachers are compassing sea and land to make proselytes, that we will not compass sea and land, for fear that we imitate them. That is all a wrong notion; for the false teachers are trying to imitate the true followers of Christ, instead of the true followers trying to imitate them; for there never was a counterfeit without a genuine to counterfeit from. These imitators would not have compassed sea and land to make proselytes if Christ and the apostles had not compassed sea and land and had followers; for they went everywhere and preached, and had many to follow them, both men and women, and were baptized of them. Don't you know that these imitators are only trying to imitate the true missionaries of God?

Now a little more about protracted meetings. Here is another thought that has come to my mind with force; that is, some of my thoughts while I lived with the Old Baptists. How is it that we can hold those people at such a distance, when God does bless them with converts that we have no reason to doubt the reality of their religion? O well, I would think, that was only God's own good time to convert them. Then the next thought that would come into my mind was, How is it that God's own good time so often comes in the time of these meetings? How do I know that I would have professed religion at the time I did, if I had not been surrounded by the circumstances that I was surrounded by? If it were not for taking so much space, I could name numbers of Old Baptists that professed religion under the influence of these meetings, and a goodly number at the mourner's bench itself. Is it not strange to think that these people can guess so well as to hold their meetings to hit God's own good time to convert sinners? I ask if these God-fearing people that engage in these meetings have not reason to think that God is blessing them, when their earnest prayer to him is for the conversion of sinners, and then see sinners converted and brought to sing the sweet songs of deliverance, and tell what the Lord has done for them. Are these reasons not enough to shake almost any Old Baptist to the very bottom? I know that there are a good many errors committed in times of these meetings; but God does not expect worship according to the perfect manner in which it is offered, but according to the sincerity in which it is offered. He knows what is the desire of these people, and sees their errors as plainly as we do; but these errors are not sufficient to

withhold God's blessings. But, on the other hand, their eyes are filled with tears of joy, and their hearts almost melt with the love of God. They are happy, and desire to see others happy too. God is a prayer-hearing God, and the Missionary Baptists know it to their joy. The prayers of the faithful Missionary Baptists are like unto old David's prayer. The preacher prays to be filled with the love of God, that he may be enabled to preach the gospel with power, and that stubborn sinners may be brought to serious reflections, and converted. And the lay members are petitioning to the throne of grace that sinners may be converted, and mourners converted; and God does hear their prayers, in the conversion of souls that are as precious unto him as ours are. In the fifty-first Psalm you can hear old David in his prayer saying, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then shall I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." Now, for being opposed in contending for the doctrinal sentiments contained in this prayer, is the cause of my wanting to change homes. Now, why did David desire the Lord to restore unto him the joys of his salvation? Simply because his preaching would be, without his soul was anointed with the sweets of the religion of God, a fruitless discourse, and would not touch the hearts of the transgressors. But, on the other hand, if his soul was in fresh remembrance of the sweets of religion, and filled with that first love that he enjoyed when he was delivered from that load of guilt and condemnation, he knew that his preaching would be calculated to touch the hearts of some of the transgressors. "Uphold me by thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways." And the happy result is, that sinners shall be converted unto God. David's anxiety did not only run to them that were already converted, but to those that were yet unconverted also. I do believe that God by his Spirit speaks to sinners in various ways. I believe that he often speaks to them through the preaching of the gospel, and causes them to meditate seriously on their true condition; which meditation causes them lasting troubles. The more religion a man feels while he is preaching, the more likely his preaching will result in good. You may say, Why does not our preaching result in the conversion of souls? for I am sure we preach the gospel, if anybody does. The gospel that you preach is good, but you stop short of a full gospel. For illustration, you, as a farmer, may plant corn, and work it, and the result is that the Lord blesses your labors. But if you sow no wheat, the result is you are without an ingathering of wheat at harvest time. No wonder, for you did not sow. So in the other case, you do not address the unconverted sinner

by preaching to him, as the Savior of sinners and his holy apostles did; and the result is that you do not have any conversions under the influence of your preaching. You get nearly all your members from under the influence of other people's preaching. Now I want you to see how that corresponds with the way the apostles got their members. They went and preached as they were commanded, and many believed, and were baptized, both men and women. So you see that they did not have to go to the Pharisees and Sadducees to get their members, but they were converted under the influence of their own preaching. Paul, in writing to the Thessalonian brethren, told them, "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is the preached gospel. Listen to the same apostle to the same brethren. "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." And he tells them that they became followers of them, and of the Lord.

Now if I have not complied with your request, I do not know how; and as I have many brethren that would like to see this in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and would like to see my reasons, I would be glad for you to have it published through the SIGNS. If this comes out for publication, it will come under the eyes of many a close observer; but my prayer to God is that it may stand the test, and come out untarnished, and that much good may be accomplished through it.

Yours in hope of eternal life,  
J. M. DULEY.

#### REPLY.

MY object in this article will be to show that your theory is wrong, and that you cannot reconcile the Bible with it. The first thing that I will notice is the statement that "the Old Baptists have, somewhere between this time and the days of Christ and the apostles, departed from the main and principal part of the gospel of Christ." If we have, is it impossible to tell where and when? You have asserted that we have departed from the principal part of the gospel; but you have not proved it, neither can you, nor any other man. Here is the doctrine of the Baptists in the year 860: "That God did not desire or will the salvation of all mankind, but that of the elect only; and that Christ did not suffer death for the whole human race, but for those persons only whom God had predestinated to eternal salvation." And at that time, "The public teachers inculcated no other doctrines than those which are contained in the Apostles' Creed." This testimony is

from a history translated from the original language. Now you may see who has departed from the principles of the gospel.

But what is the principal part of the gospel? You say that it is an address to the unconverted sinner, and then add, "The gospel is full of calls and invitations to the unconverted sinner." Now, when anything is full, it can hold no more; and if the gospel is full of calls and invitations to the unconverted sinners, there is nothing for any one else; and it is a wonder the apostles had not addressed at least some of their epistles to the unconverted sinners when they wrote them; but they were all addressed to the believer. And if a letter is addressed to you, does it belong to any one else?

Then you refer to Luke xiii. 24, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." You then ask, "Who preaches that way?" The Missionary Baptist do not; for they preach that sinners can enter in if they will only strive; not only a part, but all. Hear what they say in the *Western Recorder*, of June 8, 1831: "This world is to be saved by individual efforts." Who were they that Christ told to thus strive? It was the most strict, religious people that ever lived. They professed to do equally as much as you are doing; and it would have been regarded by them as an insult to have called them sinners. They made long prayers, and compassed sea and land to convert sinners. But they could only make clean the outside of the cup. If that was the best that men could do in that day, can they do any more to-day? "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?"—Matt. vii. 22. Can any man excel that? Those people thought it necessary for something to be done in order to eternal salvation, outside of what Christ had done; and that is what is advocated in your article, from first to last, if I understand it.

Then you tell us that "These people standing without will have a beginning, but no ending." But I understand that they are out all the time; for Christ says he never knew them.

Next you say, "When the Missionaries tell sinners what a horrible time it will be to them to see the blood-bought throng in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out, and tell them about the tormented rich man." Suppose we tell sinners all that; the question then would be, Have they got the power and ability to turn, repent, and prevent their going in that place of torment? If you think so, just turn to Luke xvi. 27, and you will see who believes the same doctrine. "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house." Verse 28, "For I have

five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Now, did not the rich man believe that if his brethren were testified to, they had the ability to turn, repent, and prevent their coming into that place of torment? Did the rich man believe the truth?

Then you tell us "The old apostle of Jesus Christ in his ministry sets forth God's foreordination, predestination and foreknowledge; but that did not hinder him from manifesting an interest for the eternal welfare of unconverted sinners in general." Now, did Christ, when he was on earth, manifest an interest for the eternal welfare of all the race of man? If he did, did he sincerely desire it? If so, will not God's predestination cover the case? What is predestination? Let Webster define it. "The purpose of God from eternity, respecting all events." Now, answer those questions, and keep Arminianism upon its throne if you can.

The next reference is to Acts xiii. 40, and you say, "Christ is warning the unconverted Jews, in order to their eternal welfare." Now, how do you know that eternal salvation is under consideration here? Examine again the fortieth verse. "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets." This refers to Isaiah xxix. 14, "Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." Now, all can see that salvation is not under consideration at all, but the wisdom of their wise men. This is the way the Scriptures are misrepresented, in order to prove that the Old Baptists are wrong, and which cannot be done any other way.

Then you tell us "that through Christ is preached the forgiveness of sin." Here we agree; for I believe that sins are forgiven in no other way, only through Christ. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12.

Then you ask, "Who is it that is justified? All that believe. It is a matter of course. Well, what is the negative of that? All that do not believe are not justified. It is a matter of course." Now notice the position here. None are justified until they believe. But you admit that they are justified by the blood of Christ. But are we required to believe, as a condition of our justification? If so, what did the apostle mean when he said, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him?"—Rom. v. 9. In the tenth verse it is shown that we were reconciled to God when we were enemies. There is a disposition in the Missionary Baptists to have

everything on conditions; but if they undertake to base justification on conditions, the old prophet will testify against them. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."—Isa. xlv. 25.

Then you say, "Paul manifests an anxiety for the unconverted Jew to believe and be justified." Now you are misrepresenting that language. The language is, "All that believe are justified;" in the present tense; not will be, in the future. But can the sinner believe in Christ while he is destitute of the Spirit of God? Examine John iii. 36. "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life." Also 1 John v. 10. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself." But "he that believeth not, is condemned already." Of course; for John says, John vi. 64, "But there are some of you that believe not: for Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." Now, did Jesus purpose to save them that he knew would not believe? or did he try to save them? We read in Genesis xxxi. 30, of some gods being stolen; and if the god that you worship cannot save a sinner when it is his will to do so, it would be a fine thing if some one would steal him, and let you come back and worship the God of the Old Baptists, who speaks, and it is done; who commands, and it stands fast.

Next you say, "I have heard the Old Baptists say that they had no fears of the devil getting any but his angels." But let me refer you to Matt. xxv. 41. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Now, if any more go, there will be no preparation for them, and then there will be a disappointment.

Next you say, "We have reason to believe that some that Paul manifested such anxiety for, may to-day be in the region of the damned." But what did Paul say or do on that occasion to manifest such anxiety for the salvation of that people? Was it because he said that the gospel must first be preached to them? or was it because he said, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles?" But examine the forty-eighth verse. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed." Now let us have some of your logic. As many as were not ordained to eternal life, did not believe. Perhaps those Jews that Paul was so anxious about were not ordained to eternal life.

Then you say, "Turn to the twenty-sixth chapter." But the book of Romans contains only sixteen chapters. But his statement is, that "the Lord was going to open the eyes of the Gentiles through Paul, or through Paul's preaching." I cannot find any such statement in

that chapter, nor anywhere else in the Bible.

Next we are cited to John vi. 37. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Then in the twenty-sixth you say we will see what gave rise to this language being spoken. Suppose the language in that verse did give rise to the language in the thirty-seventh verse; what does that amount to, when Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me?" Did he not tell the truth? And did not the angel tell the truth when he said, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins?"—Matt. i. 21. Is not the language the truth in Isa. liv. 13, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children?" According to those Scriptures, is the coming of Christ based on conditions? Now, you have just been picking about, and putting your own construction upon the language of Christ and the apostles; but the Scriptures that I have quoted are positive. You may put your own construction on them, and you cannot reconcile them with your doctrine. If the Bible is a book of contradictions, it is the worst book in the world.

But let me quote one more Scripture, which sets aside the whole Arminian theory. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. viii. 10-12. Is that the way you are preaching, or are you trying to teach sinners to know the Lord? Your whole theme in your communication is in opposition to the new covenant. Either your system is wrong or the Bible is wrong, and I am inclined to think that it is your system.

Then you refer to a people that were following the Savior for the loaves and fishes; and Christ says to them, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth forever." I am afraid that in this day and time there are many who are following Christ for the loaves and fishes; for it takes ninety-five millions of dollars annually to keep up the popular religion of the day. When the Missionaries come around on a begging expedition, could not I with propriety say, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth?" for they are continually begging; and sometimes when a person joins their church, they will beg him for money almost before he gets off his seat.

Then you refer to the twenty-eighth verse, where the question is asked, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" You quote this in order to prove that belief is the work of the sinner. But listen to the answer of Jesus in the next verse, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." So, if it is the work of God, it is not the work of the sinner. Thus you see that Jesus is against you.

The next is John xii. 36, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." Now, was Jesus talking about eternal salvation? These Scriptures that you are referring to are not on that subject at all. Do you think that Jesus required or desired them to believe on him? If he desired them to believe, he desired that the prophecy of Isaiah should not be fulfilled; for he says, "They could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart." For Christ spake in parables, "That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing, they may hear, and not understand." Then, in the face of this language, shall I say that Jesus was anxious about the salvation of this people?

You then refer to John v. 34: "These things I say, that ye might be saved." You take the position that eternal salvation is under consideration, and refer to the fortieth verse to prove it: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Here Jesus says positively that they will not come. Now, shall I persuade a sinner to do something that Jesus says positively he will not do, as though I did not believe what Jesus said? But why did you not give the whole quotation? It would not have suited your system. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honor from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." That is the reason they did not come to Christ. Just so long as sinners are destitute of the love of Christ they will not come to him; neither can they come, unless they are drawn by the Father. John vi. 44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

You then say, "The Old Baptists upbraid the Missionary Baptists for preaching to the masses of the people to repent, and to believe on Christ." A question in regard to repentance. Is repentance a voluntary act of the creature, or is it the gift of God? If repentance is a voluntary act of the creature, then your system is right; but if it is the gift of God, then it is wrong. Let us decide by referring to Acts v. 31: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." The prophet said, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned."

"Surely after that I was turned, I repented." So I take the position that the sinner must be turned before he will repent; and after he is turned he will repent, whether he is told to do so or not. One more quotation to show that the salvation of God's people is certain. "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation."—Isaiah xlv. 17.

The next expression is, "That in believing, they might have life through his name." I believe that we have eternal life before we believe on Christ. Hear what Jesus says (John vi. 47), "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." The language you refer to in the twentieth chapter of John has no reference to eternal life, but Christ is speaking directly to his apostles after his resurrection. Examine the twenty-fifth verse: "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Then examine the thirtieth verse: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye [disciples] might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye [disciples] might have life through his name." If you cannot prove your doctrine without misrepresenting the Scriptures, and taking the children's bread and giving it to the dogs, you had better turn and come back to the truth.

Then you come to protracted meetings, and have a great deal to say about them. If protracted meetings are God's ordained means in the conversion of sinners, I reckon the Bible will tell us so. Why did you not turn to the Bible and quote Scripture on that subject, and show us there your mourners' bench? I believe that I want sinners converted as much as anybody; but what good would it do them for me to tell them that I could convert them, when I know I could not? for that is the Lord's work. But suppose we hold a protracted meeting, I would make a little inquiry first. What is the condition of the sinner? "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." "All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers."—Isa. xl. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."—Gen. vi. 5. These people's hearts are not right in the sight of God; and while that is the case their works will not be accepted of him. Then please tell me, in Bible terms, what to tell sinners in that condition to do in order to salvation. Shall we tell them to look to Christ? But "they have

eyes, and see not." Then how can they look? Shall we tell them to seek the Lord? The Bible says, "There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God." Shall we tell them to come to Christ? The Bible says, "They are without strength." Then how can they come? If I were in a protracted meeting, engaged in the salvation of sinners, these things would be all the time troubling me; but if you, or any of your brethren, can remove these difficulties out of the way, and prove that salvation is not by grace, then I will engage with you. The first thing would be to quicken the sinner. Would that be our work? No; for Jesus says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John vi. 63. So you see that we have nothing to do with the quickening, for the flesh profiteth nothing. When they are quickened, are they not then mourners? Is not that a good work? "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."—Phil. i. 6. Jesus makes them mourn, and then says, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Then what is left for us to do in the salvation of sinners? Could we influence the Lord to convert a sinner when he would not otherwise do it? Hear what Job says: "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." You say that some of the Old Baptists have professed religion at protracted meetings. Of course, we do not deny that; for Jesus says, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." So when the hour comes they hear and live. Paul says, "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." On the other hand, there are several in my knowledge that got religion at protracted meetings; and after living in the church for years, professed religion at home, and then joined the Old Baptists. There is one in my knowledge that the Missionaries converted and baptized. Then the Lord converted him, and he then required them to baptize him the second time. Then he began to examine the Bible, and found they were wrong, and came out and joined the Old Baptists, and I baptized him. When any are baptized by an Old Baptist, they have a through ticket; for all denominations will receive their baptism. You admit that through your protracted meetings you gather into your church "both good and bad," but try to justify yourself by saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered both good and bad." If that kingdom under consideration in the parable is the gospel church, as you think it is, I will prove that

you are wrong; for both good and bad are to remain together till the end of the world, and the angels are to separate them; and if that is the work of the angels at the end of the world, by what authority do you do that now? According to your interpretation of the parable, you ought never to exclude a member from your church.

Next you come in upon the Pharisees, and say, "They would not have compassed sea and land if Christ and his apostles had not; for they went everywhere preaching." You had better look at that again; for the Pharisees compassed sea and land to make proselytes before Christ gave the command to the apostles to go into all the world. Don't you know that Christ from the very first taught his apostles to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees? Then you say, "How do I know that I would have professed religion at the time I did, had it not been for the surrounding circumstances?" Now, what were the circumstances? A protracted meeting? If so, how were sinners converted before these revival meetings came into fashion? For Belcher, a Missionary Baptist, when he wrote his history, said, "One hundred and thirty years ago no such thing was heard of." I ask, Where did the Baptists get their members from previous to that time?

You refer to Psalm li. 12, 13, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." Why was David praying for the Lord to restore unto him the joy of his salvation? Because he was a transgressor; for he had taken Uriah's wife, and caused Uriah to be put in the front of the battle, and destroyed. Then David cried out, "Cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions." "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." David asked the Lord to restore unto him the joy of his salvation; for he had transgressed, and his joy was gone, and he prayed for it to be restored; and then he would teach just such transgressors as he was. Do the transgressors and sinners in the text both mean the same? If not, tell me how he could convert sinners by teaching transgressors. Then let me cite you to James v. 19, 20, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Then you try to prove that the proclamation of the gospel is the means of the salvation of sinners, and that the reason we have no converts under our preaching is because we do not address the sinner. Then you say that if we do not sow we will not reap. But listen to Jesus: "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." Some seeds fell by the wayside, some fell upon stony places,

and some fell among thorns; but other fell into good ground; and none brought forth fruit except what fell into good ground. Did the seed prepare the ground? But this seed was sown promiscuously. Just so the Old Baptists preach, to all that are under the sound of their voice.

Then you refer to 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. But what do you prove here? You only prove that these brethren were chosen to salvation from the beginning. The fourteenth verse is what you are after. "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." It does not say that he called them to repentance, but to obtain the glory, which, Webster says, is "brightness;" "splendor;" "honor," &c. But examine Hebrews iv. 2. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." It seems that the word preached did not profit them that were destitute of faith.

In conclusion, you pray that your article may stand the test, and come out untarnished. I do not think the Lord has heard your prayer; for I have examined it, and it will not stand the test. You might have known that you could not prove Arminianism by the Bible, for that has been tried often since it was taught by James Arminius, in the sixteenth century. You have tried to prove that salvation is conditional, and that the preacher is an instrument in the hands of God in rearing up the church of God; but the instruments used in building a house are no part of the material that compose the building; so they will be left out. If salvation is conditional, and depends upon a certain work to be performed by the sinner, tell me how the idiot and the infant are saved. There are said to be one thousand and sixty-three idiots in the state of Kentucky. The only remedy you can have for them is, they are saved through ignorance. Then why not save the heathen in like manner? It would be a great saving; besides, you admit that when you enlighten them, there are numbers of them that do not obey the gospel, and, of course, they are lost. So you see that your gospel, instead of being a source of salvation, is a source of condemnation.

Now, in as short a manner as possible, I will tell you my reasons for being an Old Baptist. They preach that salvation is alone by grace, and no others do; and the beauty of it is, we can prove it by the Bible. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast."—Eph. ii. 8, 9. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."—Rom. iv. 4, 5. "Even so then at this present time

also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." Then we are told by the apostle, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Now, do not these Scriptures prove that salvation is alone by grace? Are they not positive language? Can you reconcile your system with them? "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." We are told here that the saving comes before the calling; and Jesus does both. Can one of these Scriptures quoted above be construed to mean that salvation is in any sense the work of the sinner? or is there any portion of the Scriptures, treating upon the subject of salvation, that contradicts those that I have quoted above? If there is, then the Bible contradicts itself. If not, then my position is proved beyond contradiction.

These are some of the reasons why I am an Old Baptist, for they can prove their doctrine by positive Scriptures; but you have to take inferential Scriptures, and construe them so as to make them contradict the positive Scriptures, to prove your doctrine. You have tried hard to prove that the principal part of the gospel belongs to the ungodly sinner. Let us examine the Bible a little upon that subject. Jesus says, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" Christ said to Peter, "Feed my lambs: feed my sheep." We have not yet found that he commanded to feed the goats. Then turn to First Peter v. 1, 2: "The Elders which are among you I exhort." What did Peter exhort them to do? "Feed the flock of God which is among you." Why did not Peter exhort them to preach "the principal part of the gospel," instead of saying, "Feed the flock?" When Paul was admonishing the Elders of the church at Ephesus he said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy

Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts xx. 28. Was not the admonition of Paul and Peter to the Elders calculated to cause them to leave out what you call "the principal part of the gospel?" Would you give the same instruction? No; you would say, Feed the goats. But who was Paul an apostle to? Hear him in Ephesians i. 1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." Then hear Peter: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter i. 1. Then turn to Jude: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." If I were to talk like the apostles did, you would say that I was leaving off "the principal part of the gospel." Then turn to Ephesians v. 25: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."—John x. 15. Did you ever read where Christ laid down his life for a goat? Examine Ephesians iv. 11, 12: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." In the fifth clause of the Articles of Faith of the Waldenses, in the year 1544, they say, "The duty of the minister is to feed the flock of God." Were the Waldenses wrong?

The positive Scriptures that I have quoted, and many others that I could mention, together with my experience, make me an Old Baptist. You and I were once together, and could meet in sweet communion; but now we are separated. Whose fault is it? If my doctrine is wrong, then my experience is wrong, and there is no heaven for me.

In conclusion, I wish to state one proposition. If salvation is by grace, it is by grace alone. If salvation is not by grace alone, it is not by grace at all. Your people do not believe that; but they know exactly how to let such propositions alone.

Yours in hope of eternal life,  
J. B. HARDY.

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**EDITORIAL.**

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 1, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

**WIVES OF DEACONS.**

DEAR BRETHREN:—I would like to see something in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the subject of the qualifications of a deacon; and especially in reference to what is said of the wives of such as are called to serve in that office. Please give your views; also I would like to hear from any other brethren who see clearly what is meant by the apostle in mentioning the qualifications which should be possessed by the deacon's wife.

F. ODOM.

GARDEN VALLEY, TEXAS.

**REPLY.**

IN compliance with the request of our esteemed brother, we submit our understanding of the inspired rule on the subject of the qualifications requisite for one who should be chosen by the church to serve as a deacon. It is only as included in the specification of these requirements that there is any particular direction given concerning the character of the wife of a deacon. Defining the character which must be found in one who is properly fitted for the office of a bishop, Paul was inspired to present the perfect standard, which is recorded 1 Tim. ii. 1-7. Then follows a similar statement of the same standard as applied to deacons. Incidentally, among the points mentioned in the requirements for perfection in the office of a deacon, it is specified that their wives must be "grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." Also, it is enjoined, "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well."

Either the requirements stated in the direction in this chapter are imperative, or they are presented as the perfect standard, to which the saints should strive to be conformed. We have never known a case where a presbytery demanded as a prerequisite to ordination, that one who desired the office of a bishop should claim to possess in himself every qualification named in the directions already cited. On the other hand, it is hardly probable that the most acceptable minister, who has been ordained and devoted a lifetime to the service of the church of Christ, could feel safe in assuming that he combined in himself those qualifications. If it be held that none shall be recognized as proper subjects for ordination without the manifestation of all those particular qualifications, it will not be likely that one can be found since the church was organized at Jerusalem, who could pass the test. Certainly such a bishop could have no personal experience in common with those who have to lament their felt sense of the power of sin in their members, by

reason of which they cannot do the things which they would. Even the apostle Paul would himself have been excluded from the list of those who possess in themselves such good things.—See Romans viii. 18. Indeed, it is the realization of this destitution of merit in themselves which causes continual grief to every one who is enabled by the light of divine grace to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin in himself. While such an understanding of this rule would exclude from the office of a bishop every conscious sinner, it would find no defect in those who could trust in their own righteousness. Evidently this cannot be the correct application of the rule. The experience of the church in all ages has shown that her bishops, as well as her prophets and apostles, were "men of like passions" with their brethren. In themselves therefore they could no more have fulfilled the perfect requirements of this description of a bishop than could any of those in the present age whom God has called to the work of the ministry. In these particulars, as well as in all others, "Our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us [including all whom God has put into the ministry] able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Here is the principle upon which the law of Christ must be understood. His words are spirit and they are life. Nothing less than the spirit of perfect conformity to the law of Christ can enable any saint to serve him acceptably, whether it be in private devotion or in the visibly organized church. Every one who is led by the Spirit of Christ has the desire to be conformed to the perfect rule given in his inspired word. This is the spirit of obedience which must move every action in order that it may be rendered in honor of the Lord Jesus. The description given of a bishop is not presented as a character to be attained by the efforts even of the saints, but it is a transcript of that character to which the indwelling Spirit of Christ aspires in all those who are called of God to that service in his organized church.

Likewise, that is, in the same manner, the pattern is given of the perfect qualifications of those whom God has chosen to serve as deacons. There is nothing stated in the inspired description but that is desired by every one whom God has given the spirit of that service in his church. Yet no mere external conformity to the letter of this rule could enable one to "use the office of a deacon well" without the spirit of these qualifications written in his heart. When these have been proved by trial they are prepared to use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. The specification in regard to the wives of the deacons seems to be only one of the incidental requirements in the character

of the deacons themselves. It is true that it might be inferred both that it is necessary for a deacon to be a married man and that his wife must also be a member of the church. If this is the correct understanding of the expression in the twelfth verse, then there can be no room for discussion on the subject. The law is the end of all argument. But it is well to examine carefully before coming to a determined conclusion in reference to the meaning of any expression of the inspired Scriptures. The twelfth verse would seem to require that the deacons must have minor children of their own, whom they should rule well. It is not consistent to understand that when their children are grown to maturity the fathers are disqualified from the occupation of their office. Neither have we ever known an acceptable deacon to be required to resign his official position upon the death of his wife. Yet a literal construction of the language in this connection would seem to authorize such requirements.

With deference to the judgment of our brethren, we have thought that the church is authorized to select such of her members as in her judgment possess the most of the qualifications specified, and under the guidance of the Spirit of Christ she may use them as her servants, whether as deacons or in any other capacity. It should be remembered that the literal meaning of the word "deacon" is "one who serves, or ministers." In this sense it is used in Luke x. 40, where the same original word is applied to the service of Martha. In other places in the Scriptures the same word is used in reference to service rendered by women. While the official position of a deacon is clearly recognized by the inspired rule, it is nowhere intimated that those who are called to occupy that office are in any sense superior to others of the members of the church of Christ. By efficient service in this office the faithful deacon will not fail to endear himself to the church, thus purchasing to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. This is clearly attested by the personal knowledge of all who have known such deacons. Yet it will hardly be held as a necessary deduction from this fact that none shall serve as deacons without possessing every qualification specified in the perfect standard.

In like manner, it is the perfect standard of the one wife who is the approved companion of this exemplary deacon, whose characteristic perfection is described in the text. While many deacons and their wives have commanded the admiration of the church by their circumspect walk and conversation, it is doubtful if any have been able to fully show in their daily deportment every mark laid down in this divinely authorized pattern. Doubtless in spirit every one who is qualified for a place in

the church of Christ does desire to be perfect; but the clearest evidence one can give of total blindness is the confident claim of perfection in himself. Thus it is very common to find those whom the church would regard as worthy examples most bitterly lamenting their own unworthiness. Only the Judge who sees the heart can decide who is led by his Spirit. When Saul persecuted the church and was breathing slaughter against the followers of Jesus, reason would never have seen in him the chosen vessel of our God, who should labor more abundantly in the cause of truth than all the apostles who had followed the Lord through his ministry. On the other hand, there is no intimation that before he was exposed Iscariot was suspected of being false to the Lord. Certainly the disciples would not now select for their treasurer one in whom they lacked confidence. In the sense of faithfulness to the truth in the heart, the church could not be competent to judge either the deacon or his wife. Indeed, it is the great question with each one of the saints whether that faithfulness really dwells in himself. Hence, it seems to our understanding that the specification that the wife in this case must be "faithful in all things," refers to her relationship as wife to the husband whom the church has chosen as a deacon. Many such wives are known doubtless to all our readers, who are not members of the organized church, yet they are ever ready to render any service in their power to those whom their husbands hold to be the saints of Jesus. Such wives are in that sense "faithful in all things" as wives to their husbands. They may not any more necessarily be professed members of the church than the children and houses of the deacons, who are also mentioned in the same connection.

The specification that the bishop and deacons be the husbands of one wife, appears to forbid that they should have a plurality of wives, as polygamy was recognized and practised among the Jews at that time. It would hardly be claimed that the death of his wife and children would disqualify one whom God has placed in either of these relations to the church. Some of the most efficient and useful ministers and deacons in our acquaintance have been brethren who were unmarried, or whose wives were not members of the visibly organized church. In some cases after years of service as deacons, we have known the wives of such to be manifested as worthy members of the church. On the other hand, there have been cases where both deacons and their wives have lost the confidence of the church after having been recognized in fellowship for many years. Since irregularities and disorders were manifested among the churches in the apostolic days, it is not wonderful that the saints in this age find it

of grace to enable them to walk in the pathway of obedience. Left to their own judgment there are none of the simple followers of Jesus who could keep the right way one hour.

In what is written it is not claimed that we are competent to instruct our inquiring brother or any reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. In compliance with his request, we have briefly as possible submitted our views on the subject proposed. It should never be forgotten that there is no infallible standard of divine truth but that testimony which is written by inspiration of God. And there is no safe interpreter of that record but that Spirit of truth by whom holy men of old were moved to write the sacred words. We earnestly accord with our brother in the desire that any brother feeling impressed to write on the subject would submit his views through the SIGNS, with the scriptural reasons for them. We should be glad to hear from brother Odom himself on the subject.

#### "SMALL THINGS."

"Who hath despised the day of small things?"—Zech. iv. 10.

In the exhibition of his purpose of grace and mercy to his chosen people, it has pleased God to work in such a manner as to exclude every occasion of boasting on the part of those of his creatures which he has used for the execution of his will. So Paul says, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."—1 Cor. i. 27-29. This principle is abundantly illustrated in the record of the patriarchal and prophetic dispensations. It is needless to specify instances, since they shine in all that testimony like the stars which illumine the natural heavens. So when our Lord would display his omnipotence in demonstration of his own unity with his Father as the eternal God, it was not by appealing to the reason of the wise and noble of the world, but in the gracious relief of the poor and needy sufferers who were accounted as unworthy the attention of the proud and religious Pharisees. In the same way the experience of the saints still attests that while the mercy and grace of God to them is above all comprehension, that grace has been brought down to them in their low estate, even when they seemed the very least of all the creatures of his power. With David, they are made to rejoice that "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly."—Psalm cxxxviii. 6. To his own chosen disciples Jesus said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the

kingdom of heaven." No provision is made in that kingdom for any great or strong ones. All the consolations of the gospel are ministered to the helpless and poor little children who are conscious of their own destitution and nothingness.

For the comfort and support of such characters the assurances of revealed truth are written in the plain and simple words and illustrations which God has chosen. While these things are thus hidden from the eye of natural wisdom, they are clearly revealed by the Spirit of truth unto every babe who knows his own utter destitution of strength and wisdom. This special manifestation of divine truth to the little children of electing love can never be understood by the natural powers of carnal reason. Even the saints can receive its rich comfort only by the operation of the Spirit who takes and shows the things of Jesus unto them. When thus revealed the small things which had been regarded as almost unnecessary in the Scriptures, are made to glow with unspeakable fullness of assurance for their encouragement.

Frequently an apparently slight change of some scriptural expression may so pervert its true meaning that instead of confirming their faith in the truth of that salvation which is in Christ, it is made to seem to forbid their hope. When the Spirit shows them the real interpretation of the inspired language they are often surprised that they could have failed to observe the correct reading of the very letter of the text which had given them trouble. Thus they are made to realize the importance of small things. In the history of typical Israel, it appeared to be but a slight deviation from the correct pronunciation of the word *Shibboleth* when the escaped Ephraimites said *Sibboleth*; yet it cost the lives of forty and two thousand of them.—Judges xii. 6. So, in the experience of the antitypical Israel, a very small thing often brings death to the comfort and present assurance of the saints. The Spirit of Christ by David says, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being *imperfect*," &c. To read this *imperfect* would seem but a very slight departure from the text, yet it would utterly destroy the essential truth of the election of all the members of the body of Christ as they were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."—Psa. cxxxix. 16; Eph. i. 4. Judaizing teachers did not directly deny that Jesus was the Savior when they taught the churches of Galatia that they could not be saved except they were circumcised after the manner of Moses; yet their doctrine did subvert the confidence in which alone the saints find rest. To the natural mind "unanimity" is all that is required by the exhortation to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, beseeching them to walk worthy of

their vocation, &c., "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 6. Upon this understanding has been based all the efforts of men by persecution to enforce unanimity in doctrine by compelling every one to accept such creeds as have been prescribed by those who have usurped temporary authority. If such efforts could be successful at any time, the agreement so enforced would not be "the unity of the Spirit" at all; much less could it claim to be "in the bond of peace." When the saints are led by the Spirit they do dwell together in unity. Without that leading, all the creeds and decrees of councils, associations, conventions, or churches, can never produce the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" and all other agreement, however unanimous it may be in the letter, is but a delusive snare of the enemy of all righteousness, designed to deceive the saints. Whenever the church of Jesus Christ resorts to any such devices of carnal reason to promote her peace, the result is certain to be just the reverse of what was promised. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is that unity of perfect liberty which is the peculiar product of that Spirit. If the saints attempt to secure that unity by their own efforts they will never fail to reap the fruit of their own works in a bountiful crop of discord, confusion and strife. The result of such carnal walking by the saints is never to promote the development of "small things." The little children of God are intimidated by hideous giants, in the place of the gentle nursing fathers and loving servants who delighted to minister to their comfort. Hard taskmasters exact the adoption of theories not taught in their experience, and the church itself becomes a dreary prison instead of a delightful home. All this and more fearful consequences result from the little substitution of "unanimity" instead of the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Time and space would fail to specify every form in which the adversary seeks to ensnare the unwary by depreciating the importance of "small things." In the petty vexations of everyday life these small things are found far more wearing and annoying than the more pretentious opposition of persecution and the reviling of our fellow-mortals. In natural warfare it is a more severe trial of courage to withstand perpetual annoyances than to rush into a charge; so it requires more firmness and endurance to sustain the "small things" of these common affairs of our earthly pilgrimage than to meet the assaults of bitter opposition and popular denunciation. In all our sojourn in this land of sin and death, may the grace and presence of the Lord enable us with all his chosen people to overcome in the strife against the "small things" of surrounding temptations and indwelling sin; and to his gracious name be glory evermore, in earth as in heaven.

THE WEEKLY

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

DEAR BRETHREN:—We have the pleasure of informing you that our Prospectus for the weekly SIGNS OF THE TIMES for 1889 is meeting with very great favor among our subscribers. Since issuing the notice we have received several hundred new subscribers; and at the present rate we shall commence our next volume with about two thousand more subscribers than we had at the commencement of this volume.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the oldest, the cheapest, and, we are assured by thousands of our brethren, the best paper; and we believe it has the widest circulation and the largest list of regular, *bona fide* subscribers of any paper of our order of Baptists. Subscribe for it.

From now until the first of next January, any one who is a paid-up subscriber may forward us *new* subscribers at the rate of one dollar a year. Any one who is not now a subscriber can have the advantages of these terms by sending us two dollars for their own subscription, and one dollar each for all subsequent *new* names.

There seems to be some misunderstanding among the brethren about these terms. The price of the paper is two dollars a year; but if any of our paid-up old subscribers can procure new ones at two dollars a year, they have the privilege of retaining one dollar for their trouble, and sending us the other dollar for the new subscriber; but no one can send to us and procure the paper for themselves for less than the regular price. If our old subscribers see fit to sacrifice their own dollar, and collect new subscriptions at one dollar each, that is a matter of their own choice; but if any new subscriber wishes to get the paper at a reduced rate, he must get it of some of our old subscribers, for he cannot procure it from this office for less than two dollars a year.

These terms will not be continued after the first of January, 1889. All new names will be entered on our list as soon as received, and credited to the end of 1889, the balance of this year being sent them free. The cash must invariably accompany orders under these terms.

We have been sending the paper to a good many at half-price, who have been represented as not able to pay the full amount. All such have been supplied at an actual loss to us, even while publishing semi-monthly, and as a weekly the burden would be greater than we feel able to stand; therefore we cannot renew them for less than the regular rates.

We shall lose on every *new* subscriber taken at one dollar a year, but we hope to retain a sufficient number of them on our list in after years at regular rates to make us whole on what we lose the first year. Still another and principal reason for receiving *new* subscribers at one dollar a year is the hope that our subscribers may by this means be able to increase the circulation of the paper to twice what it was at the commencement of this volume. They have already increased it about one-third, or we should not dare undertake publishing it weekly without an increase of subscription price; and as soon as they have doubled it we will lower the price to one dollar and fifty cents a year, although weekly at two dollars is cheaper than the paper has ever before been published.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

"He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer."—*Am. iii. 7, 8.*

Mrs. Clara Wise died at her residence in Gentry County, Missouri, at one o'clock p. m. on Friday, May 18th, 1888, in the full triumph of a living faith in Jesus Christ. She leaves a husband and two little boys, one seven days old and the other fifteen months old, together with her dear mother, five brothers, four sisters, and many relatives and friends, to mourn her departure; but they mourn not as those who have no hope, for she gave the most satisfactory evidence of a translation out of darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of God's dear Son, and made many expressions of joy and confidence. Although she suffered untold agonies, yet she would break out in songs and praise with exceeding joy. She said she believed that all for whom Christ died would be saved. She felt that she had neglected her duty in not being baptized, but said that none of her faith was near, and added, "But that will make no difference with my Savior." Being asked by her mother if she would not like to live and raise her little boys, she replied, "O no, mother, you can raise them better than I can. I do not want to live any longer, no, not for ten thousand worlds like this." Thus was she made to realize that

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are;  
While on his breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Clara was born in Warren County, Ill., September 7th, 1867, and was twenty years, eight months and thirteen days old at the time of her death. I received a telegram that she was dying; but with all the haste that I could make, her spirit had flown before I could reach her. She made a request that I should preach at her funeral. I tried to comply, and delivered a short discourse on the day following her death to a large concourse of people. May God bless those that mourn with the comfortable influence and indwelling of his holy Spirit. O that God would reconcile us to his holy will in all things!

R. M. SIMMONS.

ORRSBURGH, Mo.

"O DEATH, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It becomes my sad and painful duty to announce to the many readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the death of my dear mother, Mrs. *Permelia R. Jones*, on the twenty-seventh day of May, 1888, aged nearly seventy-seven years.

Mother had been a great sufferer at times for many years with a complication of diseases, which finally terminated her existence in this world of sin and sorrow, with the blessed hope of a glorious resurrection beyond the grave, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more.

"There sweeps no desolating wind  
Across that calm, serene abode;  
The wanderer there a home shall find  
Within the paradise of God."

When death severs the tender cords that bind in sympathetic ties our kindred and friends, no thought, no subject, no theme, no contemplation, can so effectually dispel the gloom, disperse the melancholy, or brighten up the scenery, like the hope of a glorious resurrection. Mother had been living with me for several years past; consequently her death was a hard and sad trial to us. As I stood by her bedside, and saw the tide of life fast ebbing away, I could but say, "Precious in

the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." She was laid away in the old family grave-yard, there to remain until "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Mother was baptized in the fellowship of the church at Bald Eagle, Bath Co., Ky., by Elder Samuel Jones, over forty years ago, where she remained a faithful member of the church militant until she was called by her blessed Master to the church triumphant. She leaves five children, many grandchildren and friends, together with the church, to mourn their loss; but we confidently believe that our loss is her eternal gain. May the Lord give us all grace and resignation to bow in humble submission to this stroke of his providence, and to be still, and know that he is God. "For of him, and to him, and through him, are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen."

"Mother, thou hast gone and left us,  
And our loss we deeply feel;  
But 'tis God that has bereft us,  
He can all our sorrows heal."

S. F. JONES.

WINCHESTER, Ky.

DEPARTED this life in Plymouth, Hancock Co., Ill., Nov. 8th, 1888, Miss *Rose Ellen White*, in the twenty-second year of her age.

The deceased was a granddaughter of our beloved sister, Rose Friend, with whom she lived many years in the village of Middletown (Fandon P. O.), McDonough Co., Ill., and was dearly beloved by her grandmother as an estimable young lady, and a "girl of a thousand," as she remarked at the funeral. Miss White was taken off by that dreaded destroyer of human life, consumption, with which she lingered long; and as she approached the day of her final release, being conscious that her release from sin, sorrow and affliction was near, she talked freely of her prospects of a blessed immortality, and some of her expressions were remarkably sublime and touching. She had often attended our meetings at Middletown (Union Church), and said in her last sickness that if she should recover she intended to join that church of our faith and order. She requested that I should speak on the occasion of her funeral, and selected Revelation xiv. 13 as the text she wanted used, and requested the following hymns sung on the occasion, "Jesus, lover of my soul," "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep," and "Shall we gather at the river." All her requests were complied with on the 9th of November, at Middletown, to which place her remains were brought for interment. May the Lord bless her surviving brother, sister and friends.

I. N. VANMETER.

MACOMB, Ill., Nov. 14, 1888.

DIED—At his home in Washington, D. C., Sept. 9th, 1888, *Henry J. Reid*, son of Reuben and Catherine Reid, of Prince William County, Va., aged twenty-seven years.

The deceased was married in May, 1888, and but a few months of wedded happiness elapsed when he was stricken down with that terrible disease, typhoid fever. After many days of anxious watching beside our loved one we were forced to resign the spirit to the Lord, who gave it. Medical skill availed nothing. When the Lord calls, how vain are the efforts of man. He was a warm friend of the Old School Baptists, of whom his mother is a member, and shortly before his death expressed a hope in the atonement that Christ made for his people. He passed from earth with remarkable calmness.

He leaves a wife, father, mother, sisters and brothers to mourn their loss. Elder Wm. M. Smoot delivered a very able discourse on the occasion from the words found in Revelation vii. 9-12, using the 820th hymn of Beebe's Collection, which was a great favorite with the deceased.

"My friends, come sympathize with me,  
While I my sorrows tell;  
How death's cold hand has torn away  
The one we loved so well.  
"Jackson, dear, has left us all—  
How desolate our home!  
There's not a spot where'er we roam  
But speaks, He's gone! he's gone!  
"God in his wisdom has withdrawn  
The boon his love had given;  
And though the body slumbers here,  
We trust the soul's in heaven."

M. W.

OUR little boy, **Talmage Redd**, was born October 17th, 1887, and died August 1st, 1888.

This dear little boy was a delicate but lively little fellow from his birth, and I never had much hope of raising him. He was sick about two months, and suffered a great deal. I left home last Friday to fill some appointments, and when I returned on Monday I found my sweet little babe in a dying condition, and my wife and children weeping. He lay in a stupor, with occasional convulsions, until about four o'clock on the morning of August first, when he breathed his last. I feel as much reconciled to this sad dispensation of divine providence as one could possibly feel under such circumstances. This makes six little children that we have buried since our marriage in April, 1869, and we have four left, and I feel that there are six of us on earth and six in heaven. May the Lord enable us to bow in humble submission to his righteous will in all things, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

In hope of a better resurrection,

H. J. REDD.

NORTHPORT, Ala., Aug. 2, 1888.

By request of the son of the deceased, I send for publication in the SIGNS the obituary of brother **William C. Ensor**, the oldest son of the late Deacon John B. and Delilah Ensor.

The deceased was received into the fellowship of the church at Black Rock, Md., about 1840, and remained a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace until called, as we believe, to the blissful realms of joy and peace, in his seventy-third year. He suffered greatly from a cancer, eating the lower lip so much that he was unable to partake of food for some weeks before death relieved him of his sufferings. The freed spirit returned to God who gave it on the 8th day of October, 1888, and the body was interred in the cemetery at Black Rock, after a very consoling discourse by Elder Wm. Grafton. The death and resurrection of Lazarus was, by request of the deceased, the Scripture used upon the occasion as the foundation of brother Grafton's discourse; and also the hymn, "Hark, from the tomb," was read, as requested by the deceased.

I will add that the writer has had many comforting talks with the departed aged brother, and I feel assured that he had been deeply led into the mystery of salvation by grace, recalling to my mind the blessing given Jacob by his aged father Isaac, "The smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed."

Yours in the love of the truth,

THOMAS H. SCOTT.

RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

J. H. Combs 10.50, M. T. Pence 2.50, Sarah A. Wilson 2.50, Seaman T. Christian 2.—Total, \$17.50.

## Williamston Academy.

The Fall Session begins Monday, September 3d, 1888, and continues twenty weeks. The Academy is situated in a grove of large oaks, and has a well of excellent water. The location is about a mile from Roanoke River, and ninety feet above its level.

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### CALENDAR.

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Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.

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DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE.

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON."

VOL. 56. MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1888. NO. 24.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., Nov. 11, 1888.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—It seems to me that I cannot be mistaken in thinking that I know the sound of the gospel, and that I know it as "the joyful sound;" not a joyful sound, as though it were one among many, but as the only sound in all this world of sin and sorrow that brings true and lasting joy. Notwithstanding my temptation to doubt the validity of my hope, I cannot but be comforted and encouraged by this declaration of the psalmist: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted."—Psalm lxxxix. 15, 16. What a blessing to walk in the light of God's countenance! although the more of that holy light we experience the more must we see of the deformity of our own corrupt nature, and the more must we abhor ourselves. What a blessing to be enabled to rejoice in the name of the Lord, when we find our own names so worthless. There are night seasons with all the Lord's people, when they cannot rejoice in that name; for when the Lord hides his blessed face from us we cannot behold him. But when he is pleased again to look upon us in love, the day appears again, and we rejoice in his name "all the day." What a blessing to be taught, though the lesson be so bitter, that we have no righteousness of our own that is any better than filthy rags; and that in God's sight, and in the sight of his enlightened people, the best righteousness of the best man in his best state only manifests his degradation as the servant of sin. For when one has been taught this truth by the great Teacher, he is prepared to know and rejoice in the righteousness which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ; and those who are favored to wear this royal robe of righteousness are exalted in it to sit among princes, and to inherit a throne of glory.

How few are they who do know this clear, certain sound of gospel truth, compared with the great multitudes of men. Those to whom "the word of this salvation" is sent do know it, and to them it is glad tidings of great joy; while to all the world of unquickened men it is as an idle tale, a foolish, unmeaning sound, from which they turn away their ears with anger or with carelessness and contempt.

Salvation is the fullness of this gospel theme. Salvation constitutes the whole of the glad tidings. The angel who announced to Joseph the coming and name of the dear Redeemer, declared as the reason that his name should be called Jesus, "For he shall save his people from their sins;" and the multitude of the heavenly host that was with the angel who announced to the shepherds the Savior's birth, expressed in a song of sweet, undying melody the solemn and precious truth that the glory of God in the highest is made known in that salvation through which comes peace on earth and good will toward men. It is only in salvation and by those who are saved that the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is known; for Jesus has said, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

"Who hath saved us, and called us," says an apostle, "with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." What the angel declared that Jesus should do is now declared to have been done. He has saved his people from their sins, and brings them forth as glad witnesses of that glorious truth. "Who hath saved us." This is not the cold utterance of a point of doctrine by one engaged in controversy, but it is the joyful testimony of those who are saved, and who have been brought into the sunlight of the gospel of that salvation. "Who hath saved us." Only by the power of the faith which is by Jesus Christ can any poor sinner say this. We may know that God has saved his people, which only his saved people can know; but this will not satisfy the hungerings and cravings of a sin-sick soul. Has he saved *us*? Has he saved *me*? Each must have the evidence for himself that this salvation is his. One who has divine life cannot rest contented short of this. It will not satisfy a hungry soul to know that bread will be given to all the Lord's people. He must taste the heavenly food himself. His cry is, "Lord, remember *me*." "God, be merciful to *me*, a sinner." "Remember *me*, O Lord, with the favor which thou bearest unto thy people; O visit *me* with thy salvation." Every living soul does rejoice in the truth that Jesus has saved his people, even when he cannot as yet say assuredly, "He has saved *me*;" for

there is in the very knowledge of this truth a taste of the sweetness and power of salvation, even before the understanding is enlightened to receive this as the evidence that *we* are saved.

Salvation was finished when Jesus rose from the dead. All his people were saved then. Now, in these ages of the gospel dispensation, that salvation is made known to them. They are called unto it by the gospel; not by the preaching of the gospel, for that they cannot hear until they are called; but by the gospel itself, which Paul and the apostles preached, which is "the power of God unto salvation" unto them.—2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; Rom. i. 16. It is the Lord Jesus himself who calls them. "My sheep hear my voice." It is his voice that they hear who were dead in trespasses and in sins, and his power that raises them up and quickens them with spiritual life, as Lazarus by the power of that voice came forth from death to the natural life he had before. He calls them "out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter ii. 9. He calls them "to glory and virtue" (2 Peter i. 3), "unto liberty" (Gal. v. 13), "unto the peace of God" (Col. iii. 15), unto a blessing (1 Peter iii. 9), unto the privilege of suffering for well doing (1 Peter ii. 21), unto the fellowship of the Son of God.—1 Cor. i. 9. He calls or draws them because he has loved them with an everlasting love. It is they who were dead in sins that he loved, and even when they were dead in sins.—Jer. xxxi. 3; Eph. ii. 4, 5. They are called according to his purpose, which is eternal and unchanging. Until these children of God, for whom Jesus died, these heirs of salvation, were thus called, they could know no more about that salvation than any unquickened man. But he calls them unto the knowledge of himself, who is their life and their salvation, and unto the knowledge of their relationship to him as brethren. He has eternally known them as such, and was not ashamed to call them brethren even when they were in that condition which required him to taste death for them, and to be made perfect through that awful suffering, to bring these many sons to glory; even before he declared his name unto them; for both he and they were all of one, all of God, in that eternal life which they had in him before the world began.—Heb. ii. 9-15. He knew them as members of his body even "when as yet there was none of them."—Psalm cxxxix.

16. But they cannot know him in that heavenly and eternal relationship until they are called out of the darkness of nature into the marvelous light of that eternal life in which the relationship exists, until that eternal life is manifested in them, and his name is thus declared unto them.

When these poor sinners are called, what wonders of eternal love and grace and mercy are revealed to their astonished and enraptured view, as they see, like Joseph's brethren, that he was their brother all the time, as well before they knew him as now; that the sweet union they now experience with him in their souls is a union in eternal life, an eternal, vital union; not a union brought about merely, but a union manifested; not as grafts set on to the tree or vine, but as branches springing from it.—Isa. lxxv. 22; John xv. 5. With what wondering and solemn joy do they learn that they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, that he might be the first born among many brethren (Romans viii. 29); that they were sanctified by God the Father, preserved or saved in Jesus Christ, and now are called (Jude 1); and that the great love of God which is now first made known to them, and shed abroad in their poor hearts, is the same great love wherewith that holy God has everlastingly loved them, and because of which he now has drawn them. How astonished and full of humble thankfulness are they when they learn that all this rich grace now bestowed upon them was given them in Christ before the world began; and when the inspired apostle, after having recalled their minds to the awful depravity manifested in their walk and conversation in times past, makes this amazing declaration, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Eph. ii. 1-7. How wonderful do the riches of his grace appear to us when we learn that we who were dead in sins have been quickened, have been made "alive unto God," alive with eternal life, because the Lord loved us from everlasting, and did not remove that love from us, nor abate it one jot, even when we became dead

in sins, but commended "his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. v. 8.

"Who hath saved us, and called us." What are the evidences that we are called? If one is called, his attention is necessarily directed to the one who called him. So if God calls one, the attention of that one will be toward him; and if one's mind is toward the Lord, and he is feeling the weight of heavenly things resting upon his soul, and is thinking upon the name of the Lord, that is a true evidence of that call. The promise is to them that thought upon the name of the Lord. They shall be manifested in the blessed gospel day as his, and as among his jewels.—Mal. iii. 16, 17. No one can think upon the Lord's name unless he knows that name; and to know that name is eternal life.—John xvii. 3. Men may think about gods and lords who are creatures of their imaginations; but the true and living God can only be known by revelation of the Son. How wonderful the experience of this revelation! It is essentially the same in all, though varying greatly in circumstance and degree. All labor and become heavy laden with the impossible task of commending themselves to a holy God by something good in themselves. Then, as they fall under the insupportable burden, the dear Savior calls them to himself. Their first experience of that call is a rest given them. The work they could not do is done, their burden is gone, and sweet, unspeakable rest is theirs. Long afterward, perhaps, this wonderful experience is all explained and interpreted to them by the preaching of the gospel.

Again, this experience is presented as a great mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but which is now made manifest unto the saints, unto whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory.—Col. i. 26, 27. In learning this mystery we are as those who strive to commend themselves as the people of God; but after all our efforts he says unto us, You are not my people. We now lose all hope of his favor, and realize that we are cast off, and that justly. But to the same ones unto whom it was said as justly condemned under the law, "Ye are not my people," there, in the very same place where they are left as rejected, there it shall be said unto them in the blessed gospel of his grace, "Ye are the sons of the living God."—Hosea i. 10; Rom. ix. 26. Now the eternal relationship is manifested by a birth of the Spirit. Because they are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father.—Gal. iv. 6.

Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. None, therefore, can know that salvation who have not first known that they were lost. He came to call not the right-

eous, but sinners, to repentance. None can, therefore, feel the power of that call but those who feel that they are sinners; not that they were once, but that they are now sinners, even while rejoicing in hope, as the apostle says, "Of whom I am chief." "In due time, when we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly." Before, therefore, any one can have a good hope of salvation through his death, he must have experienced the loss of all strength in himself. He is thus prepared to receive the revelation of the dear Redeemer as his Strength, and is made at times through the abundance of this blessed revelation to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

One who has been the subject of two births, one from an earthly and one from a heavenly source, must feel the motions of two distinct and antagonistic natures within him, each lusting or striving against the other, so that he cannot do the things that he would.—Gal. v. 17. All who experience this warfare must necessarily have been born both of the flesh and of the Spirit. In the flesh he feels the stinging besetments and temptations of the devil, and the captivity to the law of sin, which makes him cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In the Spirit he feels the power of this blessed answer, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In the flesh he sees only sin, and at times can see in himself no evidence that he is anything but flesh. In the Spirit he at times sees himself holy and pure as Christ is pure, and sees that he is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit before God, and earnestly expects and waits for the manifestation of the sons of God; for while in the Spirit thus experimentally, he knows that he is even now a son of God, although that sonship is not yet manifested, and it doth not yet appear what he shall be; but his joy is to feel a blessed assurance that when Jesus, who is his life, shall appear, he shall be like him, and shall appear with him in glory.—1 John iii. 2; Col. iii. 4.

Your brother in this precious hope,  
SILAS H. DURAND.

AVON, Ill., Oct. 10, 1888.

DEAR ELDER BEEBE:—Having read a few copies of your paper, and finding that it advocates the true and consoling doctrine of God, I desire to encourage you in the publication of the same, feeling confident that the Lord is blessing it to the good of his poor and afflicted people. I have recently become a visible member of the body of Christ; and as I feel a desire, and also being requested, I will try to give some account of my pilgrimage up to this time, should God be willing.

I was raised an orphan. My parents came to this country from England about the year 1848. They located in Savannah, Georgia, where

I was born, in 1850. My parents died when I was a small boy, leaving myself and one brother, who died in 1866. Then I was alone, and did the best I could, having a regard for the good admonitions of my parents. I suffered many privations and hardships from ungodly men, and as I roamed over this unfriendly world I had some serious reflections upon death and eternity. I remember once, when I was grieving about my parents being dead, and no friend to take care of me, it occurred to my mind with force, God is my Father, and he will take care of me. One beautiful Sunday morning, unexpectedly to me, I saw what a poor, wretched sinner I was. Up to this time I had thought I was as good as any one else; but now I could see a chance for every one else to be saved, but there seemed to be no chance for me, for I was undone. I remember that the tears flowed from my eyes, from a sense of my guilt. I thought I was lost, and my first step was to do some good thing, thinking thereby to gain the favor of the Lord. I resorted to prayer, but sin was so mixed with it that it was like myself, unclean in the sight of God. Sometimes I could go on without much distress, but it would return with more weight, and I grew worse, and continued to get weaker. This began when I was about fourteen years of age, and followed me up to manhood. I entered railroad employment, and traveled over many states. I lived in New York city for a while, and also in the state of Pennsylvania. I spent many days upon the coast of the Atlantic, but my troubles continued the same. Sometimes I would resolve to pray no more, feeling that my case was hopeless, and it was no use; besides, it was only adding sin to sin. But my necessities kept my heart pleading for the mercy of God. Sometimes I would look at the brutes, and wish I occupied their state. I was often taken with spells of weeping about my lost condition, although I would try to keep such things from my mind; but I could have created a world just as soon. I even grieved that I had been born, or that I had not died when a babe. Sometimes when I sat down to my meals and saw how good the Lord was to me, I would be filled with inexpressible grief, feeling my own wickedness and ingratitude to him. Let me look where I would, there was the hand of the Lord sustaining all his creation. I continued in this state of distress and sorrow till I gave up all expectation of ever being saved. About this time the dreadful impression seized my mind that I had committed some unpardonable sin, and assigned it as a reason that God would not hear my prayers. These were the days of the deepest sorrow and distress I ever experienced from infancy until now. It differs from all other sorrow, and I never expect to fully describe it with either tongue or

pen. On the coast of Georgia one morning, in this condition, in the spring of 1872, death with all its consequences to the wicked appeared to my mind, while I felt I was the chief of all. I started in the direction of a grove near by, to try to pray to God once more, and I saw him justified in my damnation. It was just. From that time I remember but little of what I did or said; but when I came to my comprehension of things on earth, I was some ten steps from the roadside, with my right hand grasping a small tree, kneeling, and praising and blessing God for his salvation. My load of guilt was gone, and I stood, as it were, at the gate of heaven.

"'Twas a heaven below  
The Redeemer to know,  
And the angels could do nothing more,  
Than to fall at his feet  
And the story repeat,  
And the Savior of sinners adore."

Here my spirit rejoiced in the light of his presence, whom to know is life eternal. The glorious plan of redemption was revealed, and I, a poor, helpless sinner, saved by the Lord, stood rejoicing in that offering which was without spot to God. I saw it was not so much the wickedness of the Jews that crucified the Son of God, but my sins helped to take his life from the earth. I looked back to the day when I first felt that load of guilt, and saw that it was the work of my Savior from first to last. God had done all the work, and to his holy name be all the praise. I did not believe I should ever sin again, but thought there was no more changes for me. I felt so reconciled to God in all things that I had no fears of the future. Death itself had no terror to me. But it was only a short time until I was in trouble again; but it was different from what I had before. Fears arose that what I had passed through was imagination, and I doubted its reality. I grew cold and despondent; and since that day I have had many sore trials in my journey, spending much of my time between hope and despair. I heard the popular clergy of the cities, where I lived most of the time, but none of them touched my case. My Bible was a new book to me, although I had been a constant reader of the Scriptures from a child. I spent many Sundays and hours at night in reading its pages. Here I found the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, predestination, election, the calling of the elect, and their final perseverance through grace to eternal glory. I reasoned with some of the ministers, but they would reject what I would rejoice in, which caused me to search my Bible; and the points of doctrine they rejected, were the very things the Scriptures abundantly proved. One day while meditating about their differing from me, this came with power to my mind, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." This sat-

ified me, and I was never troubled about it again. About two years after I first enjoyed the love of God, I stopped in a small town on Sunday; and having nothing else to do, I went out into the country to meeting, and for the first time heard the gospel preached. The preacher was very old, but he preached with great ability. He told how God saved the sinner, and in doing so he told me the same which I had passed through. His words refreshed my soul. His preaching was with power. I wanted to embrace him in my arms; and though stooped with age, yet he was a dear old man to me, for I saw in his face the light of a better world. After this I heard no more of the preaching of the cross of Christ. I drifted out to western Texas, where I remained for four or five years. The preaching I refer to was on the Atlantic & Gulf R. R., in southern Georgia. Sometimes I could remember a part of the old man's discourse, and it was preaching to me for years. One day I stepped into a post-office on the T. & P. R. R., and the post master handed me a pamphlet, saying it was something good to read. It contained Elder Vanmeter's picture, and a part of his experience. I read it with tears of joy. I wanted to see him and hear him preach. I determined I would, as soon as possible. In a short time I came north; but I was often fearing I was deceived myself, and thought if I should deceive him it would be worse; so I did not call on him. Finally I went back to Texas, where I was taken sick; and while there in distress I made a vow to God, that if I should recover and could raise the money I would spend the first in going to see Elder I. N. Vanmeter; for a desire to see him still remained. I was soon well, and earned the money, and wrote to him that perhaps I would call and see him, stating my desire to hear him preach. On the eighth day of June last I left Dallas, Texas, for Macomb, Ill., his post-office. While on my way I came very near abandoning the idea of calling to see him; but this thought was presented to me, "Thou shalt pay thy vows unto the Lord." Thus I continued till I arrived at my destination. I stepped off into a crowd of thirty or forty persons, and asked one of them if he knew Elder Vanmeter. He said he did, and told me where he lived, and all I wanted to know. Here I took courage, believing that God was leading me in the right way. I arrived at his door late in the afternoon. He met me at his gate, and I told him I was from Texas. He asked me if I was the person who wrote to him from Dallas, &c. I answered in the affirmative, when he showed deep concern, and began speaking upon the salvation of sinners. His talk did my poor heart good. It was as cold water to a thirsty soul, as food to the hungry, and as rest to the weary. We were a unit in faith, in all the blessed doc-

trine of our Savior. I embraced him in the fellowship of the Spirit. He told me what God had taught me, that salvation was of the Lord. I stopped with him a few days, and his dear family were so kind to me that I shall ever feel grateful to them and cherish them in mind, although I do not feel that I am worthy of the favors they bestowed upon me, making me welcome to their home and comforts, without money or price, when a stranger in a strange land. I shall never be able to express the soul-comforting joys I had there. I felt very thankful for their kindness, but most of all I rejoiced in heart that through providence and grace, after many years of trial, I had found the people of my God. I had wandered about as a lost sheep for fourteen years, in the desert alone, seeking company; and I can truly say it was the reigning grace of God alone that took care of me. And notwithstanding the many perils I have passed through, both by land and sea, by God's grace I yet live to adore his goodness and mercy, who hath done all things well. I trust that the dear people of God who may read this can join me in praising his name from whom all goodness flows.

I will say to God's ministers, You need not hesitate to preach that God saves sinners without a preacher, for he does it. Though I groped through this world so long, without the visible fold, yet the Lord was with me. I have enjoyed his comforting presence at times on my way; and when I was tempted and distressed, my mind would go back to the place and time that Jesus first felt precious to me.

I was baptized on the third Sunday in June, at Greenbush, Ill., by Elder I. N. Vanmeter. My peace was glorious, and my heart rejoiced in hearing the glad tidings of salvation by grace alone. Here I feasted upon the word of God, while I felt to be as nothing. O the comforting presence of the blessed Jesus, when we are doing our duty, is more than I can express. When we feel his love shed abroad in our hearts, and realize how much more his grace abounds than our sins, then we rest in him as a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Truly we receive him as a light that shineth in a dark place, as the bread of heaven, the water of life, and the wine of the kingdom. But alas! how different when we grow cold. We then feel that destitution which makes us confess to God that we are poor, helpless, and dependent upon him. Our hearts even become hard, being discouraged, and we are annoyed with sin and unbelief. How often I have, while in these trials, been made to ask if a child of God ever had such a heart as mine. Some say, "Trust in the Lord," which is right; but my troubles arise from my weakness and inability to trust in him as I should.

The admonition to trust in God is easily given, but how to perform it in spirit is a work too great for me to do at my own will, for I am as helpless as a little child. I must have his strength to do all. I must have Jesus every step of the way. It seems to me that I have traveled most of my time in darkness and tempest; but I hope I can say that I do know the joy of his presence, the peace of his love, and the power of his salvation. When I look at my trials in the past, I see they were as much appointed to me as my joys. God is a God of providence, as well as grace, and those who have only seen him as a God of grace, have only seen one side of his face.

I will soon close this narrative, fearing I have written too much; but if any of God's people should be comforted in reading it, I hope they may give all the praise to our dear and blessed Savior. The church is of the mind that I have to bear testimony to the grace of God; but I fear she may be wrong. But if it is of the Lord, it will glorify him.

May he bless us all, for Jesus' sake.

H. E. PURIS.

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Nov. 19, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Some years ago, while living in New York city, I visited one of the so-called churches; and a few minutes after being seated, the preacher came on the platform, advanced in front of his desk, and said, "The Lord is in his holy temple;" after which he sat down, and all remained quiet for a few minutes. Whether the congregation looked at the ceiling and the four corners of the building, in the hope of getting a glimpse of the personage whom the speaker had announced, I know not; nor do I know what was his idea of the Lord's holy temple; but the thought flashed through my mind, He means this frescoed edifice is the temple; he being the Lord's vicegerent, and necessarily the Lord must follow him into the midst of the multitude. The incident impressed my mind to sadness, although at that time the Lord had not given me a hope; yet I feel confident that it was the hand of the Lord that led me into that place, and enabled me to realize the hollowness of the scene before me. And to-night, dear brethren, I have a desire to try to tell to my heavenly Father's family that which I hope I have been taught by the Holy Spirit, as to what and where is the Lord's holy temple.

In the days of king Solomon, when he reigned over the children of national Israel, he built a temple to the Lord, surpassing in grandeur and costliness all other material structures; which temple was a figure of the glorious temple to be perfected by the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the church in all its beauty of holiness. When Jesus said to the Jews, who were demanding a sign, "Destroy

this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," they thought he referred to the temple in Jerusalem, which was forty-six years in building. But it is written, "He spake of the temple of his body." At another time, in speaking to his disciples, Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions." In this is represented the church, as his Father's house, of which he is the head; and every individual member of that church, which is the body, as mansions, or temples, each built and prepared in the purpose of God before the worlds were made, for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Again, we read of the church as a "building," "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together, for a habitation of God through the Spirit." How wonderful, how beautiful, and how firm and everlasting, is this building. And while the Jews boasted of their temple being forty and six years in building, the erection of this glorious building of the Lord began when time began; and when the last saint is gathered in, which will be the last stone to lay upon its structure for completion, then time will be no more. The church is also represented as a bride adorned for her husband. How unsurpassable is that love existing between Christ and his bride; for it is "the fullness of him that filleth all in all." "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." As the building spoken of is from everlasting to everlasting, so is this love an everlasting love. He loved us, not because there was any merit or beauty in us to promote or command that love, but because, as God is love, it seemed good in his sight. And we love him, not because in our natural condition we were capable of, or susceptible to, such love, but because he first loved us, and sent the Holy Spirit to take up his abode in the temple of our body, giving us the light of his knowledge, the glory of his presence, with a hope of eternal and everlasting oneness with him. I am many times lost in wonder, when I ask the question, Is this vile body of mine a temple which contains the holy Spirit of God? Can it be? Yes, the very Spirit therein teaches me the truth of what I read in the inspired record, which says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."—1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. We (with all our

boasted strength and wisdom) have no hand in preparing this temple for the reception of its occupant. Our natural pride and vaingloriousness fight to the last against the supremacy of the Spirit, and only yield when all the works of the flesh have been brought into subjection. And now we find ourselves ten thousand talents in debt, and nothing wherewith to pay. But the temple is being prepared. With whip and cords the money changers are being driven out, the tables are overturned, through the love and power of God, by Jesus Christ, our Mediator, who has become our salvation, our High Priest. He has paid all our debt and set all things in order. His mission upon earth is accomplished. By the shedding of his precious blood he hath cleansed and garnished the temple of our bodies, that the Holy Spirit might enter in and abide there, whom he promised that he would send after he ascended up into heaven. Can we not rejoice in and devoutly worship such a High Priest? He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the one among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. As John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus, preparing the way and announcing his glorious coming, so Jesus is the forerunner of the children which his Father hath given him; going on before to prepare a place, that we may also enter into that within the veil. He said to his disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

There are times in our experience when we can say in our hearts (not with our mouths), "The Lord is in his holy temple." We do not want to announce it to a mixed multitude; for that voice which speaks peace to our souls, at such times, is the same voice that spake to Moses out of the burning bush, saying, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." It is the same voice that came from Jesus, by the mouth of the psalmist David, when he spake the words, "The Lord is in his holy temple. The Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men." There are joys and rejoicings in the experience of every child of God which cannot be uttered; yet there is constantly a desire to tell our brethren and sisters, that they may rejoice with us; and when we try, they seem too deep for utterance. May we at all times be enabled to mortify the deeds of the flesh, realizing that by the grace and mercy of God we have been quickened into life, and our bodies have grown into a holy temple of the Lord.

That we may all be sustained by his living and constant presence, is the prayer of the writer of this poor, little scribble, and who is the least of all the saints, if one at all.

B. F. COULTER.

WAVERLY, N. Y., Nov. 16, 1888.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST:— After a long struggle in my mind, I have concluded to drop a few lines to you all. Not that I feel capable of edifying my brethren, for I have never felt that my services in any way have been of much, if any, benefit to the dear family of God, whom I esteem as the salt of the earth. But there has been, and is still, a desire in my heart to serve the dear saints with the ability that God has given, and leave it for them to judge; for I believe that the church is the highest tribunal known on earth. Associations or preachers cannot dictate to a church what she shall or shall not do, nor what her articles of faith shall be. They may suggest and advise, if called upon; but each individual church should transact their own business within themselves, and members of other churches have no legal right to interfere. If this rule were strictly followed, I think there would be much less confusion among the saints. If I am wrong in this, I hope that good brethren will correct me.

But this is not the subject that I intended to write upon when I took up my pen. Not long since a dear sister asked me to give my views through our family paper, the SIGNS, upon the following Scripture, "And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—Luke xxiii. 42, 43. There were two with Jesus on the cross; and although they were equally condemned, their language shows very clearly that they represent two classes or characters. The one said, "If thou be the Son of God." The little word *if* signifies doubt, unbelief. "He that believeth not is condemned already," says Jesus. Satan used the word *if* three or four times in tempting Jesus; and it is used continuously by false teachers as follows, "If you will take the first step." "If you will give your heart to God." "If you will turn in with the overtures of mercy." "If you will accept the offered salvation." "If you will seek the Lord." "He has done all that he can to save sinners; and now, if you will do your duty, your salvation will be secured," &c. Another feature in the language of the *if* thief was, "Save thyself and us." Very "charitable" indeed! Nothing selfish in that kind of a prayer. But mark; there was no acknowledgment of condemnation by this one. How would it do to compare this one with those who are so burdened with the souls and sins of others? We will now turn our attention to the other. We find that he acknowledged his just condemnation, and also the righteousness of Jesus. In this we can plainly see the experience of every subject of grace, and every one of them can adopt the language of the poet, "And if my soul were sent to hell, Thy righteous law approves it well; Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord."

"Remember me." Here are but two, the Savior and a sinner; and the prayer of this one is the prayer of every subject of grace. You may call it a selfish prayer, and correctly, for it includes one sinner, and recognizes but one Savior. The first expression, "Lord," signifies faith, belief. No *if* is used by this one. After this expression "Lord," follows the thing desired, "remember me." Peter said, "Lord, save, I perish." The blind man said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." The publican said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." When the Savior said to his disciples, "Will ye also go away?" did Peter say, "Unto whom shall we go? for some great revivalist or missionary has informed us, and we think it must be true, that thou hast the words of eternal life? No; but, "Unto whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to the disciples, "Whom do ye say that I am?" Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Not, "I think." An answer of faith is always positive. Jesus says, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." When these words were uttered Jesus was yet alive. He must die, be buried, remain in the tomb three days, rise on the third day, and enter into glory, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Hear the prophet Isaiah: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." He has fully and perfectly accomplished all this for his children; and in this glorious work he has prepared a kingdom for his people, and a people for his kingdom. Jesus said to his disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." Dear brethren, do you not feel the assurance at times that he has received you unto himself? Then you can say, with David, "The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want." By faith you enter into that heavenly kingdom which it is your Father's good pleasure to give you and all the redeemed. You sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom; and truly it is sitting together in heavenly places in Christ, while the world is put under your feet. Is this paradise? Let us see. But a few months or

years back I found you groaning on account of a burden of sin, without hope and without God in the world. You felt that your destiny was sealed, and that was eternal banishment from the presence of God. Days, months and years passed on, but no relief came. Nothing but the thunders of Mount Sinai could you hear, and that declared condemnation and death. O what anguish of soul, despair and gloom filled your mind and heart, which led you to cry, "Lord, save, I perish!" "Lord, have mercy!" "Lord, remember me!" But, wonder of wonders! in a time unexpected, Jesus, the Savior of sinners, appeared, saying, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee." Your soul made you like the chariots of Amminadab. You could mount up with wings as eagles, could run and not weary, walk and not faint. You were given beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. If the term *paradise* signifies happiness, I must believe that the children of God know something of it here below. What a contrast! Yesterday staring death, as it were, in the face, yes, one moment ago, but now rejoicing in a good hope; delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This is truly paradise to the poor, weary, heavy laden sinner, resting in the finished work of Jesus. By this one the voice of Jesus is heard in the gospel of his salvation, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." I believe that the thief on the cross was taken home to glory that day, and entered into all its fullness, that which God's dear children desire and long for while in their mortal pilgrimage here below. The time is coming, my heavenly Father's children, when you and I, if we are what we profess to be, the followers of Christ, will be called from this world of trouble and sin to a world of glory and peace, where sickness, sorrow, pain and death are felt and feared no more. That will be paradise in all its fullness and glory. How many, many are waiting, anxious to hear the welcome plaudit, "Child, your Father calls, Come home." Although I am young, there are times when I long to go home. Sin is mixed with all I do, and I know it will be the case while my natural life lasts; but I know that I do not love sin, and wish that I might never sin again.

Brethren Beebe, I leave this very imperfect scribble with you, to do with as you think best; and if published, I hope that sister Hulsizer, who requested me to write, and others may glean a crumb at least from its perusal. I hope that some other brother, who has been taught the way of the Lord more perfectly, will feel it in his heart to write upon this glorious subject, for I have scarcely touched it.

Brethren Beebe, I want to say that

I heartily indorse your position in your reply to Elder Bartley, in regard to changing the Articles of Faith. It may be necessary and right in the west, but not so in the eastern churches, I think. May the God of peace bless you, brethren editors, in your labors of love, and all the saints of God everywhere, is my prayer, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

D. M. VAIL.

BUTLER, Maryland.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I have taken the pen this rainy morning to scribble a few thoughts, for you to dispose of as you may think best, upon the subject of good works.

There are many workers of iniquity who are teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, while there are only a "little flock," "trees of righteousness," that bear good fruit. The people of God "are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," and for the express purpose that they show forth his praise. Now we find that the purpose of election, choice, or predestination of God, is that they show forth his praise; therefore any work which fails to do this cannot be called a good work. God having laid the foundation in his Son, by creating his chosen in him unto good works, how impossible it is for any to do anything that is good and acceptable in the sight of God except they be the branches of the Vine. It is as impossible for the poor, helpless, destitute sinner, who has heard the sweet, "I am come that they might have life," not to show forth the new life, as for Lazarus to have remained in that state of death, and in the grave, when the Savior said, "Come forth." When he speaks it is done; when he commands it stands fast. Those whom God hath called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to the purpose and grace of God, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, and are born of the Spirit, by the spiritual birth are prepared of God to show forth the fruits of their calling, by letting their light so shine before men that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father in heaven. That light which shines in the face of Christ Jesus gives the knowledge of the glory of God. This light reconciles the saints to afflictions, and enables them to endure as seeing him who is invisible to the eye of nature, and unheard by the uncircumcised ear. The carnal mind cannot comprehend spiritual things; neither can they by searching be found out, nor the natural man know them. Yet the enlightened, heaven-born soul sees by faith him who is invisible, and derives happiness from things not seen; and they are made to adore the Father's love, and to rejoice in the grace of the Son, through the revelation of the Holy Spirit. God the

Father is the fountain, the Son the treasury, and the Spirit the dispenser, of all grace. May we ever remember with humility and thankfulness the words of our Savior, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God," and that grace reigns by Jesus Christ unto eternal life. May we labor to enter into his rest. What have we to look to, or on what can we place our affections, but on things above, where Christ is? But what a strange mystery is man, who in his best estate is altogether vanity, and requires to be continually kept by the power of God; and he receives chastisements which compel him to fly for refuge to the hope set before him. We are thereby made to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, because God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. He causeth us to "search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord."

"Sin, and the powers of hell, Persuade me to despair,"

which brings the cry again and again, "Lord, save, I perish." By faith we receive the atonement of Christ, and trust in his righteousness for justification, and are made to ascribe fresh praise to the Lord. Not as foolish professors, who cast the anchor of their hope within themselves; but faith fixes the anchor of hope in heaven, upon Jesus, the Rock, upon which God has built his church, so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The Lord keeps his people by fresh manifestations of his love, in the way that maketh them wise unto salvation. The vital principle of love, from which faith springs forth, upon which it lives, by which it works, bringing Christ and all his victories over sin, death and the grave into the heart, silences every enemy, all Satan's accusations, and all legal condemnation, assuring us, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John xi. 26. Good works and a life with Christ are inseparable. The apostle says, "The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."

But there are to-day many who are walking the broad road to destruction, blind leaders of the blind, Pharisees, who are loud in their cries of good works, and who look upon the few "who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time," as far behind themselves in good works; who in mathematical calculation have reduced the salvation of the souls of men to a fractional part of the mighty dollar each; who say that the preaching of the doctrines of men, called by them the gospel, is the means of quickening sinners, who they declare are not dead to spiritual things, but have spiritual life as a lamp turned down very low, or as a spark of fire smothered, so that it needs only uncovering and blowing into a flame; that men can uncover this little spark, and by fanning it cause it to burn brightly, and thus

win souls to Christ, whom they set forth as opening up a way for man to save himself by a system of forms and means, called by them accepting the overtures of mercy held out to them by God, who, they say, is wooing, pleading and beseeching them to accept ere it be everlastingly too late, or before they sin away the day of grace. Yet there were some at Corinth and Galatia who were inclined to embrace the idolatry of the Belial worshipers and infidels, and whom the apostle rebukes in this direct message from the Lord, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. Again, to Timothy he says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." He admonishes him, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." The inference is that if there be no "Thus saith the Lord" for such societies and doctrines, they are the doctrines of men. The societies that are established to disseminate, and those who promulgate, the God-dishonoring theory, are Satan's emissaries; for surely they are not gospel ministers. Being of their father the devil, his works they do, and are that part of the earth that beareth thorns and briars, and are "nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."—Heb. vi. 8, 9.

May the editors and ministers who write for our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, give us strong meat, that our senses be exercised to discern both good and evil.

Your unworthy brother,

THOMAS H. SCOTT.

HANNIBAL, Mo., Nov. 11, 1888.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I am greatly pleased with the prospects of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and your conclusion to publish it weekly, and hope and believe it will prove successful in every sense of the word; for surely it will be of much benefit and enjoyment to all lovers of the truth who may have the privilege of reading its pages. I can scarcely doubt that the brethren generally will make earnest efforts to so increase the circulation that a continuance of its weekly publication indefinitely will be assured. This has long been my desire. I think your movement in this direction well timed and most judicious; and I trust you will not have occasion to regret it. The success of the undertaking will, as you say, depend in great measure upon the co-operation of the brethren, which I trust will be

cordially given. I have on the first opportunity been able to secure seven new names, and inclose you the money; and as the new volume will soon be commenced, I will inclose the money for the old subscribers here also. A list of all you will find below.

With the beginning of the weekly publication I will also begin my seventy-seventh year, and cannot hope or expect to have the privilege of its reading very long; still whatever of days, in the goodness and mercy of our God, may be allotted to me, I desire to have the SIGNS, and to enjoy the correspondence and fellowship of the dear people of God. I also desire that the remaining days of my mortal pilgrimage may be devoted to the praise of the glory of his amazing grace, wherein he has made me (as I trust) accepted in Jesus, the beloved Savior of sinners, of whom, as Paul says, I am chief. I feel this to be so in my case. The SIGNS has come to me very regularly for almost fifty years past, affording much comfort and encouragement, particularly so as I grow older, and see more of the corruptions and vileness of this old, carnal nature, in which dwells no good thing. This increases the desire for its weekly publication and more frequent visits. I may be able to secure a few more new names before the time expires.

May the Lord prosper you in this, your very laudable undertaking; for from his gracious hand come our desires and ability to serve one another. May this movement prove an acceptable service to the dear saints, and also one of pecuniary profit to you, which it ought to be. May the Lord bless his dear people everywhere, and may love and fellowship prevail among them. I was greatly pleased with your editorial on correspondence and fellowship, in the November first number of the SIGNS.

This is at your disposal. Most truly, but unworthily, your brother,

W. F. KERCHEVAL.

BRANTFORD, Ont., Nov. 21, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—Inclosed please find a letter from our dear afflicted brother, W. C. Medill. The sweet expressions it contains gave me much comfort, and I feel it would be selfish to keep it to myself. Please give it a place in our beloved paper, the SIGNS, and oblige yours in hope,

BERTHA WELLS.

HUSTON, Ont., Oct. 29, 1888.

DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST JESUS:—As I am feeling lonesome and weary this morning, and cannot go out of doors, as it is raining, my mind has been turned to write to you, thinking that perhaps this weary, sorrowful feeling may be somewhat relieved in so doing.

I have been wondering what object God had in creating and sustaining in existence this despicable, decrepit, deformed object of humanity. The cry of my spirit is, Welcome,

death, from this afflicted body! At times I feel that if I were near my kindred in my God I could take sweet counsel with them, as it were, quite often; and also to hear the glories of my God in Christ Jesus proclaimed by his servants, would somewhat modify these sorrowful feelings. But it seems that such is not for me at present, if it ever will be. Truly I am in the wilderness, fed and cared for by my God, whom (to my shame) I very often forget and wander far from; but I pay dearly therefor, for he hides his face from me, and I go mourning and crying in my soul for a return of his blessed presence. Since I last wrote to you, and before I received your reply, I was brought to the borders of death. It was believed by my relatives and friends that death had surely come to me this time; but for some purpose, known only to him, my God has kept me here. Many times since my recovery I have cried to God. Why did he not take me to him when I was so near? O to fall asleep in Jesus, from all this affliction, sorrow and oppression! But it is evident that such cannot be until his determined time is full and complete. If I were only whole, strong and well in this body, all these things would be easier borne. I truly am a strange being. It would be hard to know what I am. Sometimes I am carried away by sins great and many, and at other times reclining on (shall I say it?) my Savior's bosom. Sometimes I am oppressed with a sense of iniquity and sin, and my nothingness, so that I consider the very dust of the earth cleaner and better than I am.

You speak, dear sister, of being dead, as it were, to the sound of the glorious news, while on your visit to your sister. There is not a shadow of a doubt but such was the hand of God, though administered by the devil, and is equally as good, if not better, evidence of the tried one's sure standing in Christ Jesus; because, as a dear sister has said to me, if we are always floating on the crest of the wave, we do not relish so well, or rather comprehend in the true light, the spiritual food. Were we not an hungered, we would not appreciate the depths and riches of that bread, the which if a man eat he shall never die. Yes, dear sister, your sorrow or grief at not receiving a crumb from the Master's table is a sure evidence that you have many a time dined there. The spirit of the natural man is different from this; for though he could receive no good from listening to the glorious news unfolded, he would not sorrow and grieve that he could not receive anything from it. This grieving and yearning is the fruit of that which is born of God, and is an undoubted evidence of your indissoluble union with him. You may think, my sister, that such is not of the devil, and in one way it is not, but is of God; but in another way it is of the devil. He who hath redeemed and quickened

you, will not persuade or tell you of himself that you are not his; neither will your natural mind do or tell you so, because it (the natural mind) is enmity against God, is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. Therefore the natural mind does not want any of such things—is totally averse to them. No, my sister, it is the enemy of souls that does this, permitted and allowed by God, the which he would always do to God's chosen and quickened people were it not that God holds him from doing so, except when he wants to teach and draw his blood-bought one nearer to him; for by this very thing he causes his child to draw near and love him dearer than ever, when he again smiles upon him or her, as the case may be. The devil is a servant of God, and was manifested for that purpose, and would continually annoy God's people, but that he holds him in restraint, so that he can do no more than what God determined he should do.

Now, my sister (if so be that I am a child of God), I have written some scattered and rambling thoughts, as it were. Take out the good in it (if there is any), and eject the spurious; for I am but mortal, and I know nothing but what is taught me by revelation. My heart's cry is,

"O to be nothing! nothing!  
Lying prostrate at his feet!  
A broken and empty vessel,  
For the Master's use made meet."

May God, even your God, whom you yearn to be with, continue to bestow upon you such blessings as are necessary for your spiritual welfare; and may he impress you to remember (when holding sweet converse with him) this poor, bodily-afflicted, tempest-tossed and weary one, who, if one at all, is a very unworthy brother in Christ Jesus.

W. C. MEDILL.

IRETON, Iowa, June 5, 1888.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—I am admonished to send on my remittance for my paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, as I cannot very well do without it. It always comes to me richly laden with good news, and contains all the preaching I have in this country. I feel at times very lonely, for there is not any Old School Baptist preaching in this part of this country, so I stay at home and read my Bible, hymn book and the SIGNS, which is my chief reading. I feel that Jesus is with me, and is blessing his children wherever they may be, with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord. O blessed hope. What a sweet rest for the weary souls that trust in Jesus for salvation; for I can truly say, as Paul said, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. Jesus is all my hope for salvation; and I feel to thank God for leading me out of every false way, and putting a new song in my mouth, even praise to my God and your God. The Lord hath done all things well, and according to his own good pleasure, and for his own glory.

The last year, I think, has been my happiest days. I have enjoyed more peace of mind in regard to my spiritual welfare than ever I thought I should be permitted. How merciful the Lord has been to me, to keep and watch over me through all my life of sin.

"I am coming to the cross;  
I am poor, and weak, and blind;  
I am counting all but dross;  
I shall full salvation find."  
"I am trusting, Lord, in thee,  
Blest Lamb of Calvary;  
Humbly at thy cross I bow;  
Save me, Jesus, save me now."

I am not one of your people in name, but I hope I am one that Christ died for, and I desire to be numbered among his people, if it is his will, and the way be opened for me. I have wanted to be a christian ever since I can remember, and I do pray to God to make me one. I do love to read the Bible. I love to read where it says, "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him."

I have for years longed to find a paper that I like, but found none until I saw the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. It was a little over a year ago when I was in Middletown. Two of my dear friends gave me some copies of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES to bring home to read. I liked it so well, I concluded to take it. Now the year is up, and I will send again. I cannot express the holy delight that fills my soul at times while reading in the SIGNS the letters from the dear brethren and sisters. Though I may never have seen them in the flesh, my love goes out to them, and I feel that I am talking to them while reading. Sometimes my hope seems very small; but when I think of the Scripture, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," I feel encouraged.

"He safely led my soul along,  
His loving-kindness O how strong."

It was forty years last November when Elder Gilbert Beebe married us in Sullivan County, N. Y. I often find my thoughts roaming over days past and gone, and am astonished at beholding the road I have traveled and the things I have seen on the way, so different and so unlooked for at every step that I am very ready to believe that I know not what a day may bring forth; for as the past is wonderful, so the future is wholly unknown to me. But I am trusting in the promise of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. I cannot remember when I did not have some thought of Christ, and wished him to make me one of his children. My only hope and support is in the everlasting

God of Israel. I am weak, and depend upon nothing I can do of myself. Surely I can say, Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. As I am now drawing near the grave, being in my sixty-fourth year, and my health not very good, I feel that I cannot do without the SIGNS, so long as the Lord enables me to read it and to pay for it. I am so well pleased with your paper that I can hardly find words to express my feelings.

MRS. H. B. HARDING.

LACY, Ark., Oct. 25, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEARLY BELOVED BROTHERN:—Allow me to express my gratitude to you for the continued privilege of reading our much beloved medium, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the reading of which has been of so much strength, comfort and edification for these many years; and during all the time I doubt whether any of its readers have more heartily indorsed the sentiments therein than myself. And while I thank you, my dear brethren, as above expressed, I hope the dear Lord has supplied me with an offering of thanksgiving to his great and glorious name, for the ability with which he has blessed the editors and correspondents in declaring the doctrine of God our Savior.

There are many things to be observed, and many things to be watched and shunned by the church of God; and while the Spirit of Christ in his people is always willing to be guided by their King, yet the flesh is weak, and oftentimes they are drawn away and enticed. But God, who is rich in mercy, has granted to them the spirit of brotherly love and long-forebearance, so that they have manifested in their experience that where he does put his fear in their hearts, it is that they shall not utterly depart from him.

Do with this scribble as seems good in your judgment, and all will be right with me. Love to all the household of faith.

In hope of eternal life, yours as ever,

A. TOMLIN.

MEXICO, N. Y., Nov. 16, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS:—We inclose you check for five dollars; two for the renewal of our subscription, and the balance for new subscribers. Although we are not members of the Old School Baptist Church, yet we indorse the doctrine held forth in the SIGNS, and greatly enjoy reading it, and many times are led to exclaim, "Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." If we could but claim a place among his people, even that of doorkeeper in the house of the Lord; but we feel too poor and unworthy, and have many doubts and fears. We feel to say that we are in the hands of an all-wise God, who never errs. We believe in the absolute predestination of all things, and cannot see how it could be otherwise. It is our nature to try to do something for

ourselves; but every child of God will use up all his own material, and then how glad he is to fall back on the arm of God; for he will see that the arm of flesh is of no avail.

Yours in hope of eternal life,  
GASS BROTHERS.

DAYTON, W. T., Nov. 9, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—Seeing brother Hassell's letter in the last number of the SIGNS, I am reminded of a purpose long cherished, of paying him two dollars more for the Church History, the first two dollars being necessary to pay for its publication. I consider four dollars as cheap enough for a book of its kind, involving so much mental and physical labor as the brethren Hassell must have expended in order to its production. I know what it is for an honest man to be in debt and not able to pay. I honestly think that no brother who appreciates the book should think it a hardship to assist in relieving the burden of debt which hangs as a nightmare over the spirits of brother Hassell. How dwelleth the love of God in us, if we neglect our needy brother? Do you say that brother Hassell has put more in the book than he was required to? Then what would you take for the book and do without it? Come, brethren, let us divide up this burden among ourselves. I would not part with my book for a good deal of money.

I. N. NEWKIRK.

P. S.—You may say to the brethren that Washington Territory, eastern Idaho and southern Oregon are very good countries for emigrants who are used to northern climates. It is not as cold here as in the same latitude east. The thermometer seldom falls below twenty degrees above zero, and only for three or four days. The real cold weather seldom lasts longer than three weeks, and the snow is melted off by the Chenook winds, as they are called. All the cereals and vegetables grow here. There are no vacant lands to speak of, only far back. Beware of circulars and booms.

I. N. N.

HAMILTON, Ont., November, 1888.

DEAR ELDER BEEBE:—Inclosed find two dollars for the SIGNS OF THE TIMES for another year. I am glad you think of giving us a weekly paper, but think it well worth the two dollars. I hope, however, you may be repaid through an increase of subscribers. I wish I could help increase them, but do not know any here who would take it. Trusting you will be abundantly blessed in your good work of labor and love, I am a thankful reader of its good news. The editorials are very sweet and precious to me. I have felt the truth of your words on the subject of those who worship the beast, to my sorrow and joy. God bless you, and all the dear writers.

EMILY WELLS.

TRAER, Iowa, Nov. 15, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—I got your supplement last week, and you have my best wishes, although no one here takes the paper but myself. I am past my ninetieth year, and it is over fifty years since I began to read the SIGNS, then taken by my husband. I am as well pleased with it now as ever, and especially with the way it now speaks of predestination. I see no other way by which sinners can be saved. I have lived here thirty-two years, and never heard a gospel sermon preached in this state. All I get is from the SIGNS, so you can understand how I prize it. Inclosed find two dollars for my renewal for next year.

LYDIA THOMAS.

NEEDMORE, Pa., Nov. 12, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN:—I think if all your subscribers would try a little they could greatly increase the circulation of the SIGNS. I do feel a great interest in the SIGNS, for it is one of the best Old Baptist papers published, and the first that started, and should have the preference. Please find inclosed five dollars, for five new subscribers to the weekly SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I may send you more subscribers before the time is out.

Now, dear brethren, may the Lord be with you, and spare you to old age, to fill the place you now do, if it be his will.

ISAAC F. VARNIS.

CHENEY, Neb., Nov. 13, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—You may begin to wonder what has become of me, as my subscription is nearly a year behind. I have been moving about a little, but think I am settled now, so you may change my address to this place, Cheney, Lancaster Co., Neb. The Baptists are scattered in this country, but I think there are enough to salt the state.

Please publish in the SIGNS that my address is changed, and that I would like to hear from any of our brethren who wish to come to the west. We are in Lancaster County, twelve miles southeast of Lincoln. Land is good, climate healthy, and for those who are troubled with throat disease it is the place to live. Land is not so high priced, being from thirty to fifty dollars per acre for improved, and about twenty dollars for unimproved.

J. H. RING.

STATE ROAD, N. C., Nov. 20, 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—My prayer is for the prosperity of our dear family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES; for there is no paper that I have ever seen that I like as well as I do the old SIGNS. I have never seen any other paper that came as near contending for the whole truth as does the SIGNS. O may God preserve the old SIGNS, as pure as it is now, as long as time may last.

This leaves me very unwell, but hoping and praying that you are all well. I am, as ever, your poor, unworthy, little brother in a precious hope,

WM. R. WELBORN.

EDITORIAL.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1888.

OUR SUBSCRIBERS ARE ESPECIALLY REQUESTED TO ADDRESS ALL LETTERS FOR US TO THE FIRM NAME OF

G. BEEBE'S SONS.

ADAM THE FIGURE OF CHRIST.

ELDER WM. L. BEEBE:—Please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the question, "Is Eve a figure of the church?" I have believed she was. There are some very good brethren who object to this view, and also deny that Adam was the figure of Christ. They say this would involve us in the eternal actual two seed doctrine. O that all the children of God could see and believe the true doctrine, and not fall out about opinions of their own invention. It is so good for brethren to dwell together in unity. Your compliance will oblige an unworthy sister, if one at all.

PRISCILLA FLATFORD.

REPLY.

In considering the subject involved in the above inquiry, it is important to discriminate clearly between what is revealed in the Scriptures and the inferences which men have deduced from the inspired record. The opinions of uninspired men, whether our own or of others, can have no value any further than they are sustained by the testimony of the inspired Scriptures. Therefore when led by the Spirit into the knowledge of the truth the saints are obliged to confess that they are taught things which are hidden from the research of their natural powers of reason. No arguments which can be adduced are of any value when they are in conflict with the word which God has spoken. If we cannot understand his word, that is because of our own blindness; the truth is not limited to our finite capacity. Yet the Spirit reveals to the saints by faith the unsearchable riches of divine grace in their salvation from sin through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. In that revelation is included all the mystery which is hidden from finite reason and manifested exclusively by the grace of God which is in our redeeming Lord.

To the natural understanding the account of the creation of all material things presents no other fact but the bare history of the origin of the earth and of the creatures which are upon the earth; but in so receiving that record there is no true comprehension of the real intent for which that revelation is given. God has not manifested his grace toward the children of men simply to accomplish the work of giving instruction to the natural mind concerning the things which perish with time. Our Lord himself has declared that these Scriptures are they which testify of him. Everything therein written must therefore, when correctly understood, bear witness of Jesus as the only Savior of sinners. Paul says of Adam that he is the figure of him that was to come.—Rom. v. 14. And the next verse speaks of that anti-type of Adam as being the "one

man, Jesus Christ." All that is said of Adam is included in that figurative character which he bears. As Eve was created and received her natural life in Adam, so it is revealed that the church is the workmanship of God, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This is the principle upon which divine justice could be satisfied with the sacrifice of Jesus for the sins of his people. They are his body and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.—Eph. i. 23. When by reason of their being under condemnation in sin the holy law demanded their life, Jesus confessed that he was the very life which was the only satisfaction of that demand. By his resurrection from the dead God himself bore witness to the fulfillment of all that was required. It was thus fully manifested that divine justice recognized the unity of the sinless Son of God with his members which were under the condemnation of sin. This important and essential principle is expressed in the record given of the creation of Eve in the first manifestation of Adam. So the whole account given in the third chapter of Genesis shows the inseparable unity of Christ with his body the church. It is a mistaken notion which regards every husband and wife as representing the relationship existing between the church and her divine Husband. Adam is declared to be exclusively "the figure;" and in this particular he is the only figure which is presented in the Scriptures of truth. In her husband Eve received all the life she had; and so in Christ is all the life of the church. Eve was literally and truly bone of Adam's bones and flesh of his flesh, thus representing the inseparable unity of Christ and the whole church of his redeemed people. In the application of this figure Paul says, "He that loveth his wife loveth himself." And "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. 28, 31, 32. It is in the revelation of this mystery that the justice of God appears in the justification of him that believeth in Jesus.—Romans iii. 26. As Eve was vitally identified with her husband, when she was involved in transgression and death, Adam must of necessity go with her because the life of Adam was her life. There is no record that she ever received any other life except that which was given to Adam before God took from him the living rib which he made a woman. When she had fallen under condemnation the life of Adam was required by the violated law of God; for that was the only life she had. So it is written, "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 14. In all the account given of Adam he is

clearly typical of the Lord Jesus, who is expressly declared to be the last Adam, and as the second man he is the Lord from heaven.—1 Cor. xv. 45, 47. It is only in his revelation as identified with his body the church that any type can represent our Lord Jesus. In his character as the eternal and self-existent God he can be compared to no created thing. Indeed, there is no other manifestation of the glory of God but that which is revealed in the face of Jesus. Without his body, the church, there could be no revelation of the Lord Jesus as the Savior of his people from their sins. To make the figure complete in Adam therefore, it was needful that his wife should be made just as she was, and that she should be deceived and involved in death. Surely there could be no more accurate figure of the church in her fallen condition, than that which is presented in what is written by inspiration concerning the transgression of Eve. And no type in the volume of divine truth more clearly sets forth the infinite love of Christ to his chosen bride than the readiness with which Adam forsook the innocence of Eden to follow his bride into that transgression and death from which she could not return to his state of sinless life. Taking the whole statement of the creation and fall of man as presenting in one view the picture of that glorious revelation which is given to show the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, the expression of the truth requires that Eve should be understood to be typical of the church as the bride, the Lamb's wife. Without this the representation seems to be incomplete. The testimony of the Scriptures also sustains this application of the type of the unity of Christ and his church.

The objection of those good brethren who see in this view a necessity for the "eternal two seed doctrine," is not sustained by the proper apprehension of this truth, if they mean to say that there is in it anything to sustain the doctrine of an uncreated enemy of God. The only self-existing and uncreated being is declared by our God to be himself. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isa. lvii. 15. Since all revealed truth is the one testimony of Jesus there can be no Scripture in which this declaration of our God is contradicted. There can be no other being who shares with the eternal God this dwelling place which he claims as exclusively his own. As God is infinite in all his perfections, there can be no room for any other independent being. The existence of another power would necessarily imply a limitation of the dominion of our God. This is not only contrary to the testimony of the Scriptures,

but it is also inconsistent with the revelation which God has given of himself. If he is infinite, then there can be no limit to his existence; and if there is any other being who does not owe his existence to God, there is the limitation of the existence of God. This would render uncertain every promise of divine grace and subvert the hope of every saint. But the design of the revelation which is given in the Scriptures is that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. The only assurance on which the saints can rely for the fulfillment of the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus is in the truth of the unlimited power of God to fulfill his promise. This could not be certain if there were any power in existence independent of himself. Instead of teaching the doctrine of an independent devil, the fact is plainly declared in the Scripture that a legion of devils had not power to drown a herd of unclean swine without the commandment of our Lord Jesus.—Matt. viii. 32; Luke viii. 32, 33. Whatever may appear to the finite minds of men to be implied in the truth which God has revealed, the plain declaration of his word must be accepted as finally settling all controversy. It is expressly recorded that "The Lord hath made all for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. The eternal God has not given to any of his creatures the right to question his justice in any of his works. It is enough for those who love and fear him when he declares his own sovereign will in all that he has ordained. He is infinitely holy in forming the crooked and piercing serpent, as well as in creating the harmless dove. His power controls and restrains the wrath of wicked men and devils, as well as the love and obedience of saints and angels in heaven. Hence, the wrath of man shall praise him; and the remainder of wrath he will restrain.—Psa. lxxvi. 10.

There are indeed two distinct and opposing seeds clearly set forth in the Scriptures; but they are neither of them revealed as self-existent, or in any sense independent of the God who created all things by the power of his own word. In the original curse, God asserted his dominion over the serpent and his seed, by the decree of enmity which God would put between them and the woman and her seed. While this enmity remains there can be no question of the unlimited sovereignty of God. This decree forever establishes the opposition between sin and righteousness, and between Christ and Satan. While the Lord God reigns, there can be no compromise or agreement where God has put this enmity. These two seeds are as opposite to each other as the principles of good and evil, of light and darkness. Both are mysteries hidden from finite understanding and known only to God; but one is not more in-

dependent of the power of God than the other. All the reason which God has revealed, for the creation of those things which we call good or of those which we call evil, is that which was the occasion of the gratitude of our Lord when he said, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." So the four and twenty elders praise God, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."—Matt. xi. 26; Rev. iv. 11. In vain may carping reason seek for any further explanation of this great mystery, which God has hidden from the wise and prudent. He alone does reveal it unto babes. By divine grace the enmity of the carnal mind is subdued, and the saints are made to rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent reigns in earth and time, as well as in heaven and eternity. By their earnest desire that the will of God be done in all things, those who are led by the Spirit of God are clearly manifest, in distinction from all who would have their own will done in preference to that which is ordered according to the appointment of eternal wisdom. This test will not only expose the character of men who profess to be religious, but it is equally reliable when applied to the discernment of spirits in the experience of the tried and bewildered saints. The enmity of the carnal mind can never really be reconciled that the will of God should be done. Consequently none can have that desire without the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them. Thus the children of God are manifest by the Spirit of God producing in them the prayer that the will of God be done in earth as it is done in heaven. Every suggestion which arises in the heart in opposition to this prayer is from the spirit of enmity against God. In the saints, in whom God has wrought the will to be submissive to him in all things, there is also that carnal mind which wars against that will, and consequently they cannot do the things which they would. In this way they can witness the existence of two seeds in their own individual persons. This was felt and testified by all the saints whose experience is recorded in the Scriptures. But they have sure support and strong consolation in the knowledge that "There is no power but of God." Therefore however dark and mysterious may be the circumstances surrounding them, they know that the promise of his grace is true, and that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Rom. viii. 28.

The fact that the first Adam is the figure of him that was to come, cannot be questioned by those who recognize the inspiration of the declaration of Paul on the subject. This fact includes the typical character of Eve as included in him in her creation. When she had been

made a woman by the power of the Lord God her identity with Adam was not destroyed. He does not say that this was bone of my bones, &c., but "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." So, it is plainly written of the members of the church of Christ, that "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. To the saint who suffers from a present sense of the law of sin in his members, warring against the law of his mind, it would not be sufficient to be assured that he once was free from sin, as he was created in Adam; of this he might be satisfied. He can find no deliverance from the power of sin without the certainty that he is now identified as one with the perfect Savior. This assurance is found alone in that Spirit of Christ dwelling in him, by which he is manifested as one with Jesus, and so justified freely by his grace from all the demands of infinite justice. This is that witness which the believer hath in himself. They who have this seal are the seed which shall serve the Lord, and which shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.—Psa. xxii. 30. This is not a natural, but a spiritual seed and generation. While as sinners they are of the natural seed of Adam, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others, by their creation in Christ Jesus they are his seed, and have life and righteousness in him. They were chosen in him, and in him they were sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.—Jude 1. In this fact appears the fitness of the typical character of Eve as representing the church of God, which is the bride, the chosen wife of the Lamb. Any absurd deductions which may be drawn from this truth by carnal reason, only prove the blindness of the natural mind to the revelation which God has given of his Son.

#### THE WEEKLY

#### "SIGNS OF THE TIMES."

THIS is the last opportunity we shall have to appeal to our brethren to canvass for new subscribers for the weekly at the extremely advantageous terms given below. Let each one who reads this make a special effort to procure new subscribers, and see what result we shall be able to announce in the first number of the weekly. Many of our brethren and friends have already sent us lists of new ones, for which we return thanks; but there are hundreds still left who, if they will each make a little effort, can put the paper on a paying basis as a weekly.

The commission we offer we should think would make it a lucrative employment for many to devote the balance of this month to canvassing for new subscribers, even though they felt no special interest in increasing the circulation of the paper.

When before has any publisher increased nearly double the supply of papers at the old subscription price, and then offered to agents half of that for procuring new subscribers? This is what the SIGNS has done; and we have every reason to believe that our brethren do not mean that we shall lose by it. The more subscribers we have the cheaper we can furnish the paper to each; and at the present rate our list is increasing, we shall not only be able to issue weekly, but to do so at a reduced price.

The SIGNS OF THE TIMES is the oldest, the cheapest, and, we are assured by thousands of our brethren, the best paper; and we believe it has the widest circulation and the largest list of regular, *bona fide* subscribers of any paper of our order of Baptists. Subscribe for it.

From now until the first of next January, any one who is a paid-up subscriber may forward us *new* subscribers at the rate of one dollar a year. Any one who is not now a subscriber can have the advantages of these terms by sending us two dollars for their own subscription, and one dollar each for all subsequent *new* names.

Understand, the price of the paper is two dollars a year; but if any of our paid-up old subscribers can procure new ones at two dollars a year, they have the privilege of retaining one dollar for their trouble, and sending us the other dollar for the new subscriber; but no one can send to us and procure the paper for themselves for less than the regular price. If our old subscribers see fit to sacrifice their own dollar, and collect new subscriptions at one dollar each, that is a matter of their own choice. If any new subscriber obtains the paper at a reduced rate, he must get it of some of our old subscribers, for he cannot procure it from this office for less than two dollars a year.

The cash must invariably accompany orders under these terms, which will not be continued after the first of January, 1889.

We shall lose on every *new* subscriber taken at one dollar a year, but we hope to retain a sufficient number of them on our list in after years at regular rates to make us whole on what we lose the first year. Still another and principal reason for receiving *new* subscribers at one dollar a year is the hope that our subscribers may by this means be able to increase the circulation of the paper to twice what it was at the commencement of this volume. They have already increased it about one-third, or we should not dare undertake publishing it weekly without an increase of subscription price; and as soon as they have doubled it we will lower the price to one dollar and fifty cents a year, although weekly at two dollars is cheaper than the paper has ever before been published.

CLOSE OF VOLUME FIFTY-SIX.

FIFTY-SIX years ago, amid the darkest ages that the church of God has ever been called to pass through in this country, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES was started by a little band of brethren at New Vernon, N. Y. At that time there was no other paper published in defense of the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists. Indeed, it was hardly thought that there were enough left that had not bowed the knee to Baal to sustain such a medium of correspondence. The Baptists had been so torn and divided by the innovations of the enemy that, like Gideon's army, they seemed too few to pay to gather them together. But the Lord, who is better to us than our fears, we trust put it into the hearts of these brethren to send forth the little sheet entitled the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and, with "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon," to confound the Midianites of that day. The paper of course had a very limited circulation; but the venomous shafts hurled at it by the combined Arminian publications throughout the length and breadth of the country simply announced to the brethren scattered abroad that there was such a publication in the land, and subscriptions began to come in from sections of the country where it otherwise would have probably been years before the SIGNS would have ever been heard of; and it has been a peculiar feature of the circulation of the SIGNS, that its borders have never lessened from that time to the present. For many years the SIGNS was the only medium of correspondence among the brethren, and what one received all received, and there was more of a unison of feeling than now exists. The SIGNS was then the common medium of correspondence as among one family; but of late years there has been a manifest disposition to start sectional interests, with a separate publication for each interest. We very much deplore this state of affairs, and feel confident that it has already had its sorrowful effect; but the Lord undoubtedly has a purpose in it for the ultimate good of his children and his own glory; and if it should be in his divine providence that the SIGNS as a central and general medium of correspondence is to be replaced by a multiplicity of publications, it is our humble prayer that he may enable us to see and do his will.

The year that has just closed has been one of unusual encouragement to us, and we feel that our labors have been blessed of the Lord, and we would that we were able to render more grateful thanks for the numberless mercies received from his bountiful hand.

Thanking you, dear brethren and friends, for your kind contributions to our columns, as well as for your efficient financial aid, we bid you adieu for 1888.

MARRIAGES.

At the residence of the bride's parents, November 28th, 1888, by Elder Benton Jenkins, Mr. William J. Hoyt and Miss Mattie, daughter of Mr. George Heater, all of Middletown, Orange Co., N. Y.

On the morning of November 18th, 1888, by Elder Wm. R. Welborn, at his residence, State Road, N. C., Mr. Warrick M. Wilborn, of Rusk, N. C., and Miss Nannie Barnes, of Roaring Gap, N. C.

OBITUARY NOTICES.

ELDER G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—On the 13th of March last I received the sad intelligence of the death of my beloved sister, **Hannah J. Counts**, and my brother-in-law, **Morgan Counts**, who died at their home in Kansas, with the request of the bereaved children to write their obituaries for publication; but with the sadness of a double bereavement, and the many trials and afflictions that I was soon after compelled to pass through, I could not write for some months afterward.

Our dear brother and beloved sister fell asleep in Jesus, as we hope, he on the 9th of March last, and she on the 10th, only twenty-four hours elapsing between their deaths. He was sick only four days, with what his physician pronounced brain fever and paralysis. She was sick five days, with side pleurisy and typhoid fever. All was done for them that loving hands could do, with the help of many kind and sympathizing friends. Their son wrote me that they both passed away gently, and while on their death-beds were apparently reconciled to their sufferings. Each was anxious to know how the other was doing. When his mother knew that his father was dead, she sank very fast, having no desire to be left to mourn the loss of a dear husband. Just before she died she looked at them all and smiled, and then closed her eyes in death. They were laid side by side in one grave, in Altoona Cemetery, close by their home. O what a solemn scene it must have been to see them put away together! But we mourn not as for those that have no hope, for we know that our loss is their eternal gain.

"Why do we mourn departed friends,  
Or shake at death's alarms?  
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends  
To call them to his arms."

Our dear brother was born in Shelby Co., Ohio, Sept. 3d, 1830, and died March 9th, 1888, aged sixty-seven years, six months and six days. Our beloved sister was born in Fayette Co., Ohio, Sept. 17th, 1813, and died March 10th, 1888, aged seventy-five years, five months and twenty-seven days. They were married August 26th, 1845, in Shelby Co., Ohio, and moved to Cedar Co., Iowa, in 1852, where they raised a family of five children, three sons and two daughters. One son preceded them to the grave several years. Our brother was a kind neighbor, a loving husband, and a tender father, ever ready to help those in need. Our sister was loved by all who knew her, a kind companion and a devoted mother, always ready to minister to the sick and the afflicted. She experienced a hope in Christ, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Burch on the third Sunday in November, 1865, and united with Little Flock Church, Cedar Co., Iowa. Our dear brother received a hope in Christ, and was baptized by Elder J. B. Burch on the second Sunday in November, 1866, and united with Little Flock Church, Cedar Co., Iowa. He was chosen and ordained Deacon in said church. They were faithful members, loving the doctrine of God our Savior, trusting in the Lord, and looking alone to him as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. The brethren always found a warm reception at their house, and were pleasantly enter-

tained; and they were ever ready to help the saints, especially the ministering brethren. In course of time Little Flock Church became dissolved, and they heard but little preaching for several years, only through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. My sister often wrote me that she would take the SIGNS as long as she lived, as it contained nearly all the preaching they heard. She longed for the fellowship of the church, and in 1885 they moved to Wilson Co., Kansas, where their sons had previously located, and where they met with some precious brethren of the same faith and order.

There being no Baptist minister near at the time of their death, their funeral was not preached until the second Sunday in June, at Altoona, by Elder Berges, from Romans viii. 11. They leave two sons and two daughters, a number of grandchildren, with brothers, sisters, and a large circle of relatives and friends, to mourn their departure. May the Lord comfort and sustain the afflicted ones. May he remember the dear children in mercy, who mourn the loss of a dear father and mother, pardon all their sins, and qualify them to follow the example of their dear parents, who have gone before, and who we truly and confidently believe have entered into that rest that remains to the people of God.

"Farewell, father, mother dear!  
Life is sad without you here.  
O may we meet in heaven above,  
Where all is joy and peace and love."

ELIZABETH LOHR.

Cook, Ohio, Nov. 30, 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—Please publish in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the death of our beloved sister, **Ruth Black**.

Her disease was cancer of the liver. She was born April 24th, 1836, and died October 20th, 1888, aged fifty-two years, five months and twenty-six days. She suffered wonderfully, but bore her affliction with christian fortitude. She united with Mount Salem Baptist Church, of Noble County, Indiana, years ago; and becoming dissatisfied with the doctrine and order of the church, she left it about the time that Elder Trumbo left it. She remained in that condition until she saw that her baptism was invalid; and two years ago, in September, she was received and baptized in the fellowship of Sugar Creek Church, in the Mad River Association. She left an afflicted husband, two daughters, a number of relatives and a great many friends to mourn their loss; but we are confident that our loss is her eternal gain. She was a great admirer of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES and the doctrine it advocates. The writer of this notice visited her in her affliction, and always found her as well reconciled as could be. Sister Black was uncommonly good company, and was always ready to talk of the sovereignty and immutability of God. I have been as well edified by her conversation as any I ever conversed with. But her spirit has gone to realize the full enjoyment of her hope. May the Lord bless her dear husband and children, and all those left to mourn their loss. I tried to comfort them on the occasion by talking on the subject of a glorious resurrection.

ALSO,

**Nancy Sophronia Miller** was born March 28th, 1887, and died October 26th, 1888, aged one year, six months and twenty-eight days.

The subject of this notice was a smart and charming child from its early infancy, and was doted upon by all who knew her. It is a hard stroke on the parents, it being the only child. May the Lord reconcile them, and enable them to say, like Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

In hope of a blessed immortality,  
J. G. FORD.  
RUSHMORE, Ohio, Nov. 18, 1888.

G. BEEBE'S SONS—DEAR BRETHREN:—I send you for publication in our family paper a notice of the death of our dear old brother, **William H. Crawford**.

The Lord called him home on the 16th of this month. He was born and manifested as a child of Adam, or as Adam, in the year 1803. He was married August 6th, 1829. Afterward, by the Spirit of the living God, he was manifested as a child of God; for God was manifest in the flesh, Christ being formed in him the hope of glory. He was baptized, with his wife, in August, 1831. Being taught clearly in his early experience that salvation from sin, and destruction by sin, is by grace, and of the Lord, he remained steadfast and unmovable in that conviction until death. He died in the triumphs of faith, fully believing that those who sleep in Jesus God will take to himself. Many lovers of truth will remember his amiable, generous, hospitable disposition, first as a member in the city of Philadelphia, and then in Chester Co., Pa. His membership was at London Tract for many years, always quietly and lovingly filling his seat, desiring always to fulfill the law of Christ. His last days were spent with his daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel W. Woolford, in Dorchester Co., Md., where he received kind and loving attention by his two loving and affectionate daughters, and other loving and cheerful hands. He was heard many times to say, "I am blessed in every way; my wants are all supplied." He greatly enjoyed the society of the saints. During the session of the Salisbury Association, the last of October, he was pleasant and cheerful, although confined to his room, and many of his brethren and friends had sweet interviews with him. I have had the privilege of being with him often for some years past. He has been remarkable to me in his steady pressing toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. May every one of us that feel our loss be fully sustained and reconciled by grace. For him to die was gain.

His remains were laid in the church burying-ground at London Tract, Chester Co., Pa., beside those of his wife, on the 19th instant. Elder Chick was with me at the funeral.

Yours in love and fellowship,  
JOSEPH L. STATON.

NEWARK, Del., Nov., 1888.

DEAR BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is my painful task to write the obituaries of brother H. Mathis' children and grandchildren. His son, **Rasho Mathis**, was born Sept. 22d, 1883, and died Aug. 20th, 1888. He was a lovely boy. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

ALSO,

The second was a daughter, **Thelony Phillips**. She was born Feb. 17th, 1871, and died Aug. 29th, 1888. She was not a member of the church, but was a true believer in Christ. On her death-bed she told her mother not to grieve for her; that if it was the Lord's will to take her, she was willing to go. She sent for me, and I went to see her. She said that she wanted me to sing and pray, which I did. I saw that her hope was beyond the grave. She bore her sickness with patience to the last, begging the Lord for mercy.

ALSO,

The third was a granddaughter, **Bettie Lott**. She was born Feb. 3d, 1883, and died Aug. 29th, 1888. Though so young, she prayed much of the time of her sickness, the last words of her prayer being, "O sweet Jerusalem! Come, Lord, and take me in your arms."

ALSO,

The fourth was a granddaughter, **Elor Lott**. She was born Jan. 20th, 1880, and died Sept. 4th, 1888. She was a kind and affectionate girl.

ALSO,

The fifth was a daughter, **Sarah Lott**,

the mother of the two little girls. She was born April 26th, 1858, and died Sept. 8th, 1888. She was a choice member of the Old School Baptist Church, and her place in the church was always filled. She died in the full triumphs of living faith. She told her father and mother not to grieve for her; that she was willing to go, and did not dread death. Her mind was on the Lord continually. She talked a great deal in her sickness, and told us how she loved the people of God, and it was her delight to be with them. We sympathize much with the bereaved, and hope that what is our loss is their gain.

It will be remembered that the bereaved H. Mathis is the father of Draton Mathis, whose obituary appeared in a previous issue of the SIGNS, together with a son-in-law, Mark Phillips, and also his boy Sammie, the husband and child of Thelony Phillips. They died about the time of the previously mentioned Draton Mathis; making in all eight of the near connections during the present year, occasioned by epidemics, first measles, and later bilious dysentery.

M. H. WEST.

VERNON PARISH, La., Nov., 1888.

BRETHREN BEEBE:—It is with tearful eyes that I write the obituary of my dear husband, **Albert Sanford**, who departed this life May 12th, 1888, aged forty-eight years and three months.

He leaves a lonely widow and one daughter, besides many other relatives and friends, to mourn their loss. He was not a member of the church visible, but I have a hope for him that he has gone to the church triumphant. For the last few years of his life he read the Bible and the SIGNS a great deal, and seemed to enjoy their contents. He was a kind and affectionate husband and an indulgent father. It seems hard to give up our loved ones, but I can say, Not my will, but thine, O God, be done. Our beloved pastor, Elder Bundy, spoke from the words, "Be still, and know that I am God," which was comforting to the bereaved ones.

URSULA SANFORD.

WALTON, N. Y., Nov. 7, 1888.

### TWO DAYS MEETINGS.

THE Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury will hold a Two Days' Meeting, the Lord willing, on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 1st and 2d, 1889, at her meeting-house, beginning each day at 11 o'clock, and continuing without intermission. Those in heart with the church and all lovers of the truth are cordially solicited to come and hear.

Those coming on the cars will stop at Kelly's Corners or Roxbury on the day before the meeting.

J. D. HUBBELL.

### YEARLY MEETINGS.

THE yearly meeting of the Second Old School Baptist Church of Roxbury will be held at their meeting house on the first Saturday and Sunday in January, 1889, beginning at half-past ten a. m.

Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are invited to attend. Those coming from the east on the cars at 11 00 a. m. will stop off at Halcottsville, and those from the west on the 2 00 p. m. train at Roxbury. Come on the day before the meeting.

Done at the regular church meeting, Nov. 1st, 1888.

I. HEWITT, Pastor.

### RECEIVED FOR CHURCH HISTORY.

Z. C. Chambliss 2, T. S. Hughs 2 50,  
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#### CALENDAR.

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Fall Session ends Friday, January 18th, 1889.

Spring Session begins Monday, January 21st, 1889.

Spring Session ends Friday, June 7th, 1889.

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For further information address

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